

Emergency Responses to Critical Incidents

It is important that all staff have a consistent understanding of how to respond to emergency situations or critical incidents involving severe behaviour. This consistency ensures that appropriate actions are taken to ensure that both pupils and staff are kept safe.

An emergency situation or critical incident is defined as an occurrence that is sudden, urgent and usually unexpected, or an occasion requiring immediate action. Severe behaviour is defined as behaviour of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the pupil or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy.

Basic defusing strategies

- **Avoid escalating the problem behaviour**
 - *Avoid shouting, cornering the pupil, moving into the pupil's space, touching or grabbing the pupil, sudden responses, sarcasm, becoming defensive, communicating anger and frustration through body language.*
- **Maintain calmness, respect and detachment**
 - *Model the behaviour you want pupils to adopt, stay calm and controlled, use a serious measured tone, choose your language carefully, avoid humiliating the pupil, be matter-of-fact and avoid responding emotionally.*
- **Approach the pupil in a non-threatening manner**
 - *Move slowly and deliberately toward the situation, speak privately to the pupil/s where possible, speak calmly and respectfully, minimise body language, keep a reasonable distance, establish eye level position, be brief, stay with the agenda, acknowledge cooperation, withdraw if the situation escalates.*
- **Follow through**
 - *If the pupil starts displaying the appropriate behaviour, briefly acknowledge their choice and re-direct other pupils' attention towards their usual work/activity. If the pupil continues with the problem behaviour, then remind him/her of the expected school behaviour and identify consequences of continued unacceptable behaviour.*
- **Debrief**
 - *Help the pupil to identify the sequence of events that led to the unacceptable behaviour, pinpoint decision moments during the sequence of events, evaluate decisions made and identify acceptable decision options for future situations.*

If basic defusing strategies do not diminish the immediate risk to pupils or staff, remove all other children ensuring two members of staff are left to continue defusing the situation.

Physical Intervention

Staff who have been training in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (such as Team Teach) may make legitimate use of physical intervention if all non-physical interventions have been exhausted and a pupil is:

- Physically assaulting another pupil or staff member;
- Posing an immediate danger to him/herself or to others.

Appropriate physical intervention may be used to ensure that our duty of care to protect pupils and staff from foreseeable risks of injury is met. The use of physical intervention is only considered appropriate where the immediate safety of others is threatened and the strategy is used to prevent injury.

Physical intervention can involve coming between pupils, blocking a pupil's path, leading a pupil by the hand/arm, shepherding a pupil by using the 'caring C', removing potentially dangerous objects and, in extreme situations, using more forceful restraint.

It is important that all staff understand:

- Physical intervention cannot be used as a form of punishment;
- Physical intervention must not be used when a less severe response can effectively resolve the situation; and
- The underlying cause/stimulus of the behaviour.

Physical intervention is not to be used as a response to:

- Property destruction;
- School disruption;
- Refusal to comply;
- Verbal threats; and
- Leaving a classroom or the school, unless pupil safety is clearly threatened.

Any physical intervention made must:

- Be reasonable in the particular circumstances;
- Be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident;
- Always be the minimum force needed to achieve the desired result; and
- Take into account the age, stature, physical ability, understanding and gender of the pupil.

Chart detailing the distinction between Minor and Major incidents.

Minor (Minor incidents are dealt with by all staff using the pink ladder.)		Major (Major incidents are sent straight to the Headteacher.)	
Definition	Example	Definition	Example
<p>Verbal misconduct</p> <p>Pupil engages in low intensity repeated use of inappropriate language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swearing when they make a mistake. Mumbles obscenity in frustration. Talking back. Yelling at another pupil. Disrespectful tone. Insolent response to instructions. Muted or inferred swearing. Poor attitude – “whatever” “this sucks”. 	<p>Verbal misconduct</p> <p>Swearing or curse words directed towards others in a demeaning, provoking or aggressive manner.</p> <p>Disrespectful messages and actions include negative comments based on race, religion, gender, age, ethnicity, disability or other personal matters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swearing or use of abusive language directed at another person. Name calling. Deliberate use of offensive language in front of peers. Discriminatory or racist remarks. Arguing with an adult.
<p>Truant</p> <p>Pupil on school grounds but not in their classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil wandering around school. Hiding in toilet. Hiding in other location. Using playground equipment during class time. 	<p>Truant</p> <p>Unexplained absence without parent /guardian knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaving school grounds without permission. Repeated failure to attend school
<p>Threats to others</p> <p>Pupil threatens to harm others (low aggression and low likelihood of acting upon threat).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressive body language. Verbal threat: “If you don’t let me borrow your pencil, I won’t play with your at break.” “I’m going to hide your pencil case.” Written threat. Non – verbal threat (shaking fist). 	<p>Threats to others</p> <p>Pupil threatens others with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm (high aggression and high likelihood of acting upon threat).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging / instigating others to fight them or each other. “I’ll get you after school.” “You’re dead.” “I’m going to bash you.” “I’m going to kill you.”
<p>Refusal to participate or comply with routine or instructions</p> <p>Pupil chooses not to engage in their lesson by passive defiance or avoidance actions; fails to engage in set tasks or respond to instructions. Refusal to follow class and/or school routines, rules and expectations.</p>	<p>Not following school expectations:</p> <p>As a member of Bishops Down Primary School I am expected to show and strive for; Achievement, Self-belief, Perseverance, Independence, Respect</p> <p>Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I’m not doing this.” Task avoidance. Extended time taken to gather required materials Refusing to gather required materials. 	<p>Refusal to participate in program of instruction</p> <p>Pupil repeatedly and defiantly refuses to comply with teacher instructions to engage in work program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaving the classroom without permission. Continuing verbal defiance / refusal. Deliberately destroys work task and/or work materials.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arms folded, head on desk. • Walking away or around classroom. • “You can’t make me.” 		
<p>Property misconduct</p> <p>Low intensity misuse of school property by using school or other equipment inappropriately causing little to no damage or harm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throwing objects in class. • Kicking / pushing over furniture. • Scribbling on inappropriate surfaces. • Hiding others and school belongings. • Tearing pages from books. • Snapping rulers, pencils, crayons, erasers etc. • Using other pupils’ property without permission (no intent to steal). • Deliberately discarding waste on the floor. • Disrespectful use of all school property (low aggression). 	<p>Property misconduct</p> <p>Pupil wilfully damages or misuses property that results in substantial damage or harm.</p> <p>Theft – Taking someone else’s property without permission. Being in possession of, having passed on, or being involved in the deliberate removal of someone else’s property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate sabotage of equipment or property. • Deliberate vandalism. • Clogging drains and toilets with paper or other foreign objects. • Disrespectful use of all school property (high aggression). • Cutting of carpets, curtains etc. • Theft of property that belongs at school, or to the school, or to that of others.
<p>Physical misconduct</p> <p>Inappropriate physical conduct / touching which could result in minor injury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushing / shoving. • Holding / grabbing during play. • Physical contact that encroaches on personal space and/or private body parts. • Rough play. • Play fighting. • Throwing objects and/or food. • Spitting on the ground. • Playing tackle football. 	<p>Physical misconduct</p> <p>Actions involving serious physical conduct where injury may / has occurred. Intent to cause injury, harm to others, or threaten others physically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fighting. • Punching. • Kicking / Scratching. • Pushing off furniture / equipment. • Slapping / Choking. • Tackling / throwing to the ground. • Hair pulling. • Spitting at or on others. • Hitting with an object. • Using or intent to use sharp / dangerous objects or weapons. • Pulling own or other’s pants down. • Deliberately throwing objects at others.
<p>Other conduct that is prejudicial to the good order and management of the school</p> <p>Unsafe or disruptive behaviour outside classrooms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riding bikes, scooters or skateboards around school grounds. • Entering out of bounds areas without consent. (Caretakers shed, adult only cupboards, staff room) 	<p>Other conduct that is prejudicial to the good order and management of the school</p> <p>Dangerous behaviour on school grounds. Conduct that damages the school’s name and reputation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing breach of minor definition. • Inappropriate behaviour while on camps or excursions. • Swearing or any other anti-social behaviour in the wider community (regardless of wearing school uniform or not).

<p>Misconduct involving object</p> <p>Engaging in non-serious but disrespectful attitude to school equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking school rules or pencils • Taking apart pens 	<p>Misconduct involving object</p> <p>Using objects/equipment as weapons with the intention of causing harm to self, others or property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using an object to cause serious harm to others or property. • Self-harm.
<p>Lying</p> <p>Engaging in minor, low level lying and/or cheating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting rumours/stories – sharing untrue, hurtful stories about other pupils. • Consistently cheating to win at games (in and out of the classroom). 	<p>Lying</p> <p>Pupil tells lies/spreads rumours then denies behaviour violations despite evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading serious stories, gossip and/or rumours about others with the intent to hurt or harm their reputation and get them in trouble with staff.
<p>ICT misconduct</p> <p>Pupil engages in non-serious but inappropriate use of personal or school technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending inappropriate emails, video material etc. • Use of personal technology in class without permission. • Refusal to turn of devices when requested • Not depositing mobile phone in provided container • Turning on mobile phone during school day and on school property 	<p>ICT misconduct</p> <p>Pupil engages in serious misuse of personal or school technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending malicious emails, offensive video material etc. • Attempting to and/or accessing and displaying pornographic or sexually explicit material. • Recording pupils (self or others) engaging in socially unacceptable behaviour. • Uploading to social media recordings of behaviour violations. • Using mobile phone in school
<p>Dress Code</p> <p>Failure to comply with school uniform policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing items that do not adhere to the school's dress code without notification from parent/guardian. • Repeatedly breaching the school's dress code without parent/guardian notification. 	<p>Dress Code</p> <p>Wearing of clothing that does not comply with expected standards of dress, including inappropriate clothing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing clothing displaying offensive, obscene language and/or imagery with the aim of causing offense.

<p>Disruptive</p> <p>Low intensity inappropriate behaviour that disrupts or disturbs teaching a learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate talking not-related to classroom activity. • Talking over teacher/staff. • Calling out. • Playing with object/toys. • Picking threads from the carpet. • Hiding from the teacher/staff. • Deliberately making distracting noises. • Talking to others to distract from learning. • Wandering around the room. 	<p>Disruptive</p> <p>Repeated behaviour that deliberately stops teaching and learning for a prolonged period of time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained talking/calling out. • Repeatedly out-of seat with the intention to distract others from learning.
<p>Defiant/Threats to adults</p> <p>See Major</p>		<p>Defiant/Threats to adults</p> <p>Repeated refusal to follow adult directions. Pupil threatens an adult.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yelling hostilely at an adult and refusing to follow directions. • Abusive/threatening language or gestures towards adults. • Repeated refusal to follow adult directions
<p>Bullying</p> <p>Pupil engages in low level, repeated behaviour intended to annoy, bother or belittle others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excluding others. • Minor insults. • Minor teasing/name calling • Hiding other pupils' personal property. • Making inappropriate or threatening faces. • Whispering about another pupil. 	<p>Bullying</p> <p>Pupil engages in repeated or serious threats, intimidation, negative comments or personal attacks based on race, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, disability or other personal matters. Includes cyber bullying.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual comments intended to intimidate. • Verbal and/or physical threats to harm another person. • Inappropriate touching of others. • Encouraging/instigation others to fight. • Forcing another pupil to hand over personal property.