

CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines

Foreword

CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines has been developed by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) in the context of the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church and the mission of Catholic schools in their communities.

It aims to support schools in their work with **all** students, ensuring equitable access and inclusion. We acknowledge the gospel truth that we are all called to 'have life and have it abundantly' (Jn 10: 10) and our commitment is to the development of the whole person – spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically.

Catholic schools are committed to providing equitable access and opportunity for all. Awareness of, recognition of, and response to the needs and rights of all individuals are essential to human dignity. These are also essential elements of the Catholic identity of schools. Inclusive practices embrace and celebrate diversity, invite belonging and provide opportunities for participation and achievement of appropriate learning outcomes.

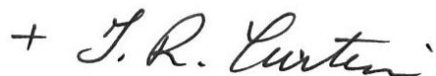
Foundational to Catholic schools and our work with students, families and communities is the building of genuine, authentic relationships. The development and promotion of high-quality relationships are responsibilities shared by all members of the school community. Teachers, students, families, parishes and the wider community contribute to fostering life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity of each person.

CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines assists schools in considering structures, processes and practices that are conducive to supporting positive engagement and behaviour for all students. Students in our schools today present with a diversity of needs and require support in a range of ways. Ensuring the design set-up and function of schools to promote inclusive practices is essential if schools are to embrace and celebrate diversity, invite belonging, and provide opportunities for participation and the achievement of appropriate learning outcomes.

Positive behaviour approaches are cohesive, collective and collaborative. They provide support and focus on the development of values, relationships and skills; they are embedded in the curriculum, organisation, ethos and environment, and in the partnerships and services within the school community.

CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines reflects the values of Catholic education and supports the development of the 'whole person'. I hope you will find this resource useful in your ongoing support of students.

I commend this publication to you.



Bishop Terry Curtin
Chair, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd

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PART A: OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK

1. Catholic Social Teaching

A fundamental belief for Catholic schools is that Jesus is seen in God's image and likeness in its human expression, and that Jesus' life and teachings show all people 'the way, the truth and the life' (Jn 14: 6). In accordance with this belief, values to be promoted within a Catholic school's understanding and practice of pastoral care include love, respect, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, reconciliation and justice.

To acknowledge the gospel truth that all are called to 'have life and have it abundantly' (Jn 10: 10) is to commit to the development of the whole person – spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically.

Wellbeing in Catholic schools supports the development of all members of the school community. It is reflected in many aspects of school life, and especially in a school's vision and mission statements, policies, procedures, programs, teaching and learning curriculum, student activities, student support and wellbeing services, behaviour support processes, family engagement, community partnerships and school climate.

Catholic schools are committed to providing equitable access and opportunity for all. Awareness and recognition of, and response to, the needs and rights of all individuals are essential to human dignity. They are also essential elements of the Catholic identity of schools. Inclusive practices embrace and celebrate diversity, invite belonging and provide opportunities for participation and achievement of appropriate learning outcomes. Schools, striving to cater for the wide diversity of student needs and talents, determine and use a variety of approaches and practices that are based on solid research and which effectively engage all students in their whole development.

2. Purpose

These guidelines present Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) expectations and recommended procedures regarding behaviour support. The guidelines are intended for school principals, leadership teams and all teaching staff to support the development of school policies and processes. Note that each diocese will also have policies and guidelines for suspension, negotiated transfer and expulsion to support schools.

While schools develop policies and practices to support positive student engagement, it is recognised that some students present with highly complex and unsafe behaviours which directly impact on their engagement and achievement. The CECV recognises that schools require guidance and support to work effectively with these students and their families.

3. Guiding Principles

There are a number of guiding principles that support whole-school positive behaviour in a Catholic context:

- The life and teachings of Jesus provide inspiration, guidance and strength in all relationships and interactions. Jesus provides the ultimate expression of love, justice, compassion and reconciliation. It is in authentic relationships with one another that Catholics truly come to know the love of Jesus.
- A positive school environment is guided by gospel values and honours the dignity of the individual, the family and the school.
- The development and promotion of high-quality relationships are responsibilities shared by all members of the school community. Teachers, students, families, parish members and the wider community contribute to fostering life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity of each person.
- Whole-school approaches are those involving ethos, relationships, understanding, communication, management, physical environment, learning strategies, curriculum, support procedures and responses, relationships with parents and the surrounding community (Weare 2004).

Note that this document is informed by the following resources:

- Victorian Department of Education and Training's 'School Policy and Advisory Guide' <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/pages/spag.aspx> (n.d.(c))
- CECV's *Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines (Occupational Violence)* <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/getmedia/bad5e328-b5f9-4742-a66c-0c7f20ae21ff/Safe-and-Sound-Practice-Guidelines.aspx> (2014b).

4. Positive Behaviour Support – Overview

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is the application of schoolwide systems designed to improve school climate and reduce problem behaviour, as well as create individualised interventions. The school community (including students) is empowered to actively participate in the design and implementation of PBS across all school contexts. It also increases the individual's quality of life by increased access and engagement.

Proactive strategies are aimed at decreasing behaviours of concern and replacing them with pro-social skills that lead to enhanced social competence.

Schools work towards creating a climate where positive behaviour is explicitly taught and reinforced, and prevention approaches are emphasised. Incidences of negative behaviour are responded to systematically and consistently.

Data is used to inform and monitor the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Supporting individuals with safe behaviours is focused on addressing the function of the behaviour and the teaching of skills and desired behaviours. Support provided to students is aligned directly with the goals and targets set out in the students' Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) and/or Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs).

Data systems such as the School-Wide Information System (SWIS) provide school personnel with accurate, timely and practical information for making decisions about the fidelity and impact of individualised interventions that:

- value the student and support positive interaction
- have a clear data-informed strategy focused on preventing the occurrence of an identified behaviour by avoiding or adapting the circumstances that usually trigger this behaviour
- focus on building skills and developing alternative preferred behaviours
- consider the motivation for or functions of behaviours
- use the student's strengths and interests to increase success.

5. Curriculum

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's [*Personal and Social Capability*](#) relates to the development of social skills and personal development, enabling students to understand themselves and others, and to manage their relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively. The curriculum progressions of learning assist PBS.

The *Personal and Social Capability* curriculum aims to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to:

- recognise, understand and evaluate the expression of emotions
- demonstrate an awareness of their personal qualities and the factors that contribute to resilience
- develop empathy for and understanding of others and recognise the importance of supporting diversity for a cohesive community
- understand how relationships are developed and use interpersonal skills to establish and maintain respectful relationships
- work effectively in teams and develop strategies to manage unsafe situations constructively.

Although titled *Personal and Social Capability*, the words 'personal/emotional' and 'social/relational' are used interchangeably throughout the literature and within educational organisations. The term 'social and emotional learning' is also often used, as is the acronym 'SEL'.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) evidence-based approach and definitions of SEL are the best known and most highly respected in the world today, providing an excellent framework for integrating the academic, emotional and social dimensions of learning.

6. Victorian Catholic Education Offices

Each diocese has an approach to PBS which is firmly underpinned by this document. To access the diocesan-specific policies, processes and additional support material, please contact your local office:

Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Melbourne	9267 0228
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Ballarat	5337 7135
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale	5622 6600
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sandhurst	5443 2377

7. CECV Intervention Framework

[CECV Intervention Framework 2015](#) is a useful resource for schools in developing effective school practices.

The publication (CECV 2014a) identifies key principles, structures and processes which should be considered in developing effective school practice. It outlines an 'intervention process' encompassing accurate identification and ongoing monitoring of individual students, with particular emphasis placed on identifying students who may require an adjusted level of support to actively and successfully engage in appropriate learning.

The intervention process is informed by the 'Response to Intervention' (RtI) model, defined as the change in behaviour or performance as a function of an intervention (Gresham 2009). The RtI model is a multi-tiered approach to providing services and intervention for students, including screening interventions at increasing levels of intensity, progress monitoring and data-based decision-making. It aims to provide early, systematic and appropriately intensive assistance to students who are demonstrating skill deficits (Fuchs & Fuchs 2006).

This model integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximise student achievement, promote positive interactions and reduce behavioural problems.

The CECV recognises that this model offers schools a means to better understand and support students with diverse learning needs.

CECV Intervention Framework 2015 describes the five components of the intervention process as:

1. Identification – where teachers collect quality information from a range of sources
2. Targeted assessment – where teachers are asked to consider additional individualised assessment and observational data, if further student information is required
3. Data analysis – where the assessment and observational data collected assists teachers in developing a detailed student profile and identifies learning goals
4. Learning and teaching – where best matched research-validated or evidence-based interventions and adjustments are implemented with fidelity to meet the identified learning needs of students
5. Evaluation – where student progress, as a response to an intervention, is evaluated. In addition, the integrity and fidelity of the intervention are also evaluated.

8. Response Continuum

'Behaviour' is best understood as a continuum which ranges from students' needs requiring universal classroom-based support to the most complex needs requiring an individualised approach.

CECV Intervention Framework 2015 describes the Rtl model as:

a multi-tiered approach to providing services and intervention for students, at increasing levels of intensity, based on progress monitoring and data analysis. This model integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximise student achievement, promote positive classroom interactions and reduce behavioural problems (CECV 2014a, p. 9).

The model offers schools a means to better understand and support students with diverse learning needs and considers the academic and behavioural capabilities of learners holistically. Students respond to a series of constantly interacting elements – teachers, students, curriculum, pedagogy and the learning environment. The Rtl model is based on the belief that schools have the responsibility to create the best possible learning environment for each and every student through effective screening, progress monitoring and data-based decision-making processes using a multi-level decision-making system.

It is expected that students will move between and within the tiers of intervention. When the response continuum is considered specifically with regards to behaviour support, it is notable that the intensity and frequency of support necessarily increases, relative to increases in the behavioural needs and challenges of the student. The level of intervention becomes increasingly systematic and data-driven, depending on where the student's needs lie on the continuum. The data continues to provide a holistic view of all variables that impact on learning behaviour outcomes.

Sugai and Horner (2002) describe the key features of these tiers as detailed in the following pages.

Tier 1: Universal

The 'first tier' of support or Tier 1 represents primary or universal schoolwide management strategies designed to meet the needs of all students and develop common language and focus for all school staff, families and community members. Universal or Tier 1 strategies are designed to be implemented consistently and efficiently across all school settings, classroom and non-classroom (e.g. yard, hallways, assembly). All students receive high-quality, scientifically based instruction differentiated to meet diverse student capabilities. This includes teaching specific behaviours or social skills that will lead to success in school, providing frequent positive reinforcement for expected behaviour, consistently addressing social errors, and arranging learning and teaching environments to ensure success for all. This level should meet the needs of approximately 80% of a school's student cohort.

Key features

- Tier 1 requires explicit teaching of positively stated behaviours.
- It responds to high-frequency, low-intensity behaviours as part of regular practice.

- All school staff take collective responsibility to ensure effective instruction and behaviour support.
- Systems are in place to ensure consistent and predictable responses to behaviour.

Continuum of support

- Identify a small number of positively stated school expectations.
- Prominently display the expectations.
- Explicitly teach the expected behaviours.
- Strategically reinforce the expected behaviours.
- Implement effective whole-school approaches for teaching strategies, curriculum and learning environment to maximise positive student engagement.
- Modify situations or environments known to produce high levels of problem behaviour.
- Use behaviour data to plan, evaluate and improve Tier 1 – universal implementation.
- Where students are identified as experiencing difficulties to positively engage, convene a behaviour support meeting to determine if further intervention strategies can be selected for trial or if a move to Tier 2 support is required. This would involve identifying learner capabilities and collecting relevant behaviour data, e.g. SWIS and collection of frequency intensity or duration data.

Tier 2: Targeted (small group) intervention

Some students require small group targeted interventions in addition to Tier 1 supports. Students should only be provided with targeted interventions following documented intervention and review at Tier 1. These interventions refer to efficient and effective strategies, programs or interventions in which groups of students participate. A school with strong universal (80%) and small group targeted supports (15%) in place should be effective for about 95% of students in the school. Some students need just a little more structure or support to meet the behavioural expectations. Some examples of multi-tiered levels of support may include PLPs or BSPs.

Note: There may be a small number of students who need much more intensive or individualised supports to address their needs and to experience success in school – Tier 3.

Key features

- Ongoing implementation of universal strategies for all students.
- Targeted supports informed by data.
- Team approach to support implementation.
- Consultation to determine appropriate supports/adjustments.

- Rapid access to the intervention.
- Low effort by staff with maximum benefit to students.
- Uniform implementation by all staff.
- Flexible intervention based on student need.

Continuum of support

- Continue to implement positive student behavioural responses that are strongly and explicitly reinforced.
- Continue to explicitly teach positively stated behaviours.
- Continue to reinforce the behaviours, and ensure all staff are aware of the intervention and their role in the process.
- Develop a student profile which identifies the student's needs.
- Align interventions with schoolwide expectations supported by quality instruction.
- Consistently implement interventions, with some flexibility for minor modifications for some students.
- Match the selected intervention to the function of the student's behaviour.
- Use the Rtl process to determine if the intervention strategies are working.
- Establish a team* to implement the following:
 - collection of data
 - analysis and interpretation of data
 - data-informed intervention
 - evaluation towards identified goals
 - review of progress to adjust interventions.
- Ensure the school team and classroom teacher are responsible for the implementation and review of the targeted supports.
- Seek additional support when necessary, e.g. regional office.
- Consider Tier 3 supports, if further, more intensive support is required.

* The 'team' could include parent/s, teacher/s, Learning Support, Student Welfare/Wellbeing personnel and other relevant support staff.

Tier 3: Intensive intervention

When Tier 1 and Tier 2 systems are in place, the foundation for implementing Tier 3 supports is established. When a strong universal system and secondary interventions are in position, a school could reasonably expect that no more than 5% of the overall student population might require this level of support. This level of intervention is designed to provide intensive support for students presenting with complex, ongoing difficulties and who are considered significantly at risk. Complex behaviours are targeted to remediate and prevent further escalations. Typically, students should only be provided with targeted interventions following documented intervention and review at Tier 2.

When a student has been identified as needing tertiary or Tier 3 supports, there are at least three major changes considered:

Setting

The instructional setting may change so that the child is working in small groups or one-on-one as needed.

Instruction

The instruction must change to match the student's identified needs. The content will be individualised or made more explicit in those areas of deficits. The changes to instruction or the BSP should be implemented and reviewed.

Assessment

Finally, the evaluation and assessment will be intensified and individualised. Comprehensive evaluation is needed initially to inform the BSP development, and then progress monitoring data will be collected at least weekly to ensure that the supports are provided and the student is benefiting or making progress with those supports.

Schools should, where required, seek the involvement of staff from the Catholic Education Office in their diocese. Where applicable, additional input may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians or behaviour experts.

Tier 3 supports are implemented following documented intervention and review at Tier 2.

Key features

- Ongoing implementation of universal and Tier 2 strategies.
- Tier 3 individualised supports developed through comprehensive analysis of data to collaboratively assess the problem behaviour.
- Team approach, inclusive of those who know the student best, to support and evaluate implementation. The team could also include external consultants.
- Interventions tailored to each student's needs and designed to minimise problem behaviours.

- Ongoing consultation with all key stakeholders (student, family, school, consultants) to determine appropriate adjustments.
- Consistent implementation by all stakeholders.
- Team evaluation of the fidelity of delivery and contextual fit for the environment including adequate resourcing.

Continuum of support

- Continue to implement positive student behavioural responses that are strongly and explicitly reinforced.
- Continue to explicitly teach positively stated behaviours.
- Continue to reinforce the behaviours.
- Refine the student profile which identifies the student's needs.
- Use the RtI process to determine if the intervention strategies are working.
- Ensure Tier 3 team inclusive of leadership takes responsibility for the following:
 - ongoing and frequent collection of data
 - analysis and interpretation of individual data
 - implementation of data-informed individualised intervention
 - evaluation of individual identified goals
 - daily or weekly review of progress to adjust interventions.
- Access additional supports to address the student's needs.

PART B: DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND PLANS

9. Developing a Behaviour Support Policy

Effective schools collaboratively develop and implement fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management and support systems based on pro-social values, social competencies and positive relationships.

A Behaviour Support Policy details behaviour management guidelines that clearly articulate positive behaviour expectations, support systems and responses in order to create learning environments in which all students are included and feel safe and supported.

When schools are developing an effective Behaviour Support Policy, key elements need to be considered. The policy should:

- reflect the school vision and its distinctive values
- clearly outline the aims, processes and strategies that will be implemented
- ensure that respect for the rights of all members of the school community is at the forefront of all practices
- acknowledge the role of partnerships between school staff, families, students and community
- have clear and practical processes that are grounded in PBS
- reflect current research about student engagement and appropriate behaviour
- acknowledge the need to teach students
- the skills required for demonstrating appropriate, pro-social behaviour
- clearly outline strategies for positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour
- clearly outline prevention strategies for a range of inappropriate behaviours
- provide for the ongoing evaluation of processes and procedural fairness.

The Victorian Department of Education and Training (2010) designed a resource titled 'Developing a behaviour guidance policy'. It includes information on the key elements of behaviour management and support that should be included.

Behaviour Support Policy Template

The Behaviour Support Policy Template is a useful guide for schools when developing their own Behaviour Support Policy. Schools are encouraged to use the Template as a starting point which can be tailored to reflect the expectations, strategies and systems applicable to their school.

10. Behaviour Support Plans

A BSP is a working document designed to clearly outline the adjustments that will be implemented in order to maximise the student's engagement, thereby increasing learning outcomes.

BSPs should be developed through a collaborative problem-solving process involving all significant people in the student's life, including parents/carers, classroom teachers, special educators and support staff. Plans will only be effective if they are implemented on a consistent basis and with fidelity. In order to develop successful interventions, BSPs must be based on an understanding that all behaviour has a communicative function and on knowledge of the strengths and needs of the individual student.

An effective BSP is developed to support the student in learning skills required for positive social interaction, along with the ability to become a more effective and successful learner.

In designing a BSP, the following key elements need to be considered:

- All those directly involved with the student contribute to the gathering of relevant information and baseline data.
- The underlying causes/functions of the specific target behaviour are identified.
- Goals set are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-referenced – 'SMART' goals (Doran 1981). The goal describes the desired replacement behaviour and planned interventions/adjustments.
- The plan is succinct and easy to interpret.
- The BSP is developed through the Program Support Group (PSG), with the responsibilities of each key person clearly denoted.
- A coordinator leads the team through the development, implementation and review of the BSP.
- The focus of the BSP is on proactive strategies, teaching replacement behaviour and positive reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- The BSP is consistently implemented and monitored by all staff who engage with the student and across all learning areas.
- A timeline for the proposed intervention(s) is established and a date set for review through a PSG (review of behaviour data and interventions).
- The BSP is modified/faded as the student demonstrates significant positive change over a sustained period.
- Ongoing adjustments needed for maintained positive behaviour and/or for ongoing support are considered.
- The BSP is recorded in writing, signed by the parties involved and dated.

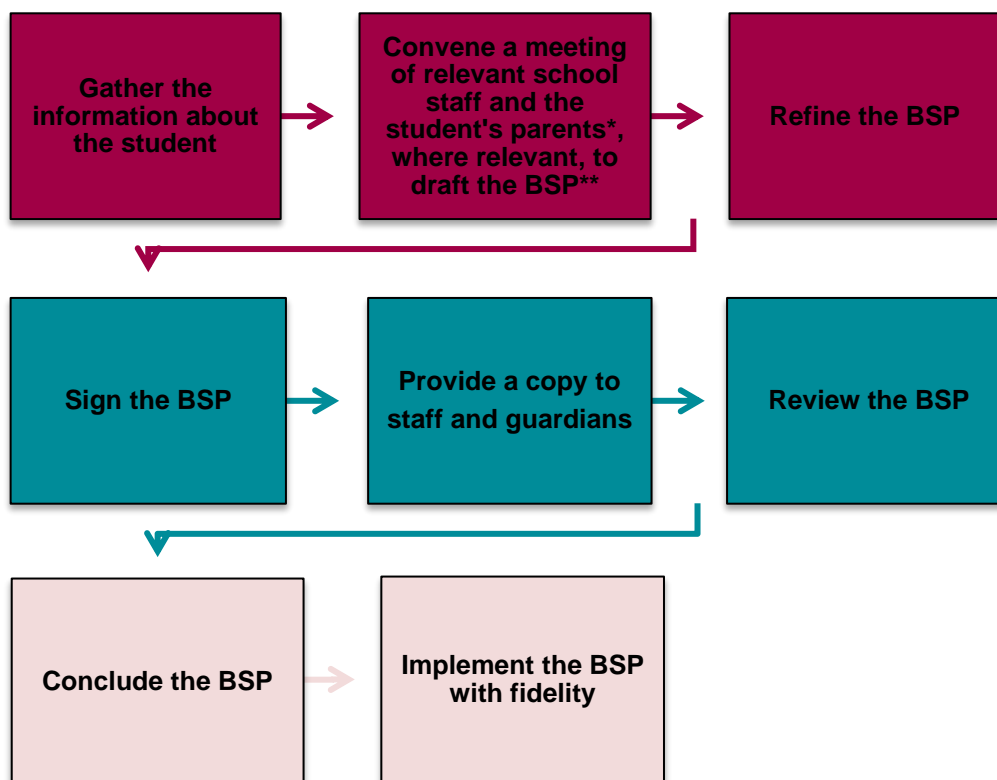
- Regular follow-up monitoring ensures evidence of sustained achievement of positive change in the student's ability to self-manage and better engage in learning.

Where a student has a BSP, the school should conduct a risk assessment (if the school deems there is a risk of harm to self or others) and determine whether they also need to develop a Student Safety Plan. A Student Safety Plan is recommended for a student who has demonstrated that their behaviour escalates to the point at which learning and teaching are severely interrupted and/or the safety of others is compromised.

Developing a Behaviour Support Plan

In designing the BSP, the underlying issues or causes for the behaviour will need to be clearly identified, along with strategies and supports to directly address these causes. Where school staff are not familiar with the process for developing a BSP, it is recommended that advice is sought from the relevant Catholic Education Office personnel working with the school.

The following eight-step process guides schools in developing a BSP. The steps are:



* In these guidelines, 'parents' encompasses parent/s, guardian/s and carer/s.

** In the context of students presenting with complex and unsafe behaviour, a 'BSP' may take the place of a PLP or be developed in addition to a PLP.

Behaviour Support Plan Template

Schools are advised to review the Behaviour Support Plan Template for each diocese. While an effective BSP must be tailored to the particular student, these documents provide a useful starting point.

11. Conducting Risk Assessments

Risk management, including the use of risk assessment tools, is an important way to protect staff and students, including students who exhibit safe behaviour.

The process of risk management consists of identifying the risk, assessing the risk, eliminating or controlling the risk and documenting the process.

Risk management involves taking all reasonably practicable steps to remove hazards and reduce risk.

A risk assessment should be conducted whenever a risk to health or safety is identified in the school. It is good practice to conduct a risk assessment in relation to the activities of students known to exhibit complex/unsafe behaviour and certainly those who have a BSP. This process helps staff to identify any potential risks, assess those risks and take steps to eliminate or control the risks. In this way, the process of risk management aligns well with PBS and its emphasis on prevention strategies.

In some situations, the risk assessment process may confirm the need to develop a Student Safety Plan as a means of eliminating and/or controlling the risk.

Risk management process

1. Identify the risk – There are a number of ways to identify risks in a school, including workplace inspections, audit reports, consultation with employees, and incident reporting and investigation. Where a student exhibits unsafe behaviour and/or has a BSP, staff should (if they have not already) consider whether there are any hazards/potential risks associated with the activities of the student.
2. Assess the risk – Once the risk has been identified, it should be assessed by relevant school staff (e.g. classroom teacher in consultation with wellbeing coordinator, principal and/or health and safety representative). Using the Risk Assessment Tool, each identified hazard should be scored and allocated a level of risk.
3. Eliminate or control the risk – Once the hazards have been identified and the risks assessed, strategies should be put in place to either eliminate or control the risk. One strategy may be the development of a Student Safety Plan.
4. Team-teach – One option for employers is to increase the number of available staff. Another is to provide additional training to increase competence levels.
5. Document the process – Adequate record-keeping will demonstrate that you have been actively working to ensure safety at your school. Records should show that the process has been conducted properly, including information about the hazards identified, associated risks and the control measures implemented.
6. Monitor and review – Risk controls should be reviewed at regular intervals, including after any significant incidents involving the student, to ensure that they have the desired impact.

Further information

CECV's *Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines (Occupational Violence)* contains further information on assessing, reducing and monitoring risks caused by students who may be aggressive or violent (2014b).

Risk Assessment Tool

Schools are advised to make use of the Risk Assessment Tool when supporting students presenting with unsafe behaviours.

12. Developing a Student Safety Plan

Students with a BSP may also require a Student Safety Plan as a means of reducing risks to health and safety.

A Student Safety Plan should be viewed as an extension of the BSP. It is designed to provide school teams with a planned response to support the management of a student's escalation cycle, and created by staff who know the student well and can accurately describe the student's escalation cycle. The school needs to have systems in place to ensure the Student Safety Plan is known and implemented with fidelity by all relevant staff, e.g. casual relief teachers, specialists, classroom teachers and leadership.

It will be implemented whenever required for a student who has demonstrated that their behaviour escalates to the point at which learning and teaching are severely interrupted and/or the safety of others is compromised. This behaviour will usually be presented as overt non-compliance, threatening conduct and/or verbal or physical aggression.

The plan may involve identifying the function of the behaviour and any observed triggers. All resulting interventions, strategies and procedures are identified to meet individual student's needs. A Student Safety Plan is aimed at prevention, and followed consistently by all those involved with the student. It is vital that staff involved are committed to remaining calm and supporting the student.

In developing an effective Student Safety Plan to ensure the safety of all concerned, the following matters need to be identified:

- atypical behaviours and planned responses
- triggers and planned responses
- how to intervene early in the escalation
- environmental factors that can be manipulated
- replacement behaviour/s that need to be taught.

In addition to recommending strategies for use with the student, it is also useful to identify any strategies that should be avoided, e.g. those that have previously been tried but did not assist or further escalated the situation.

Student Safety Plan Template (A & B)

Both formats of the Student Safety Plan Template provide a useful basis for the development of a tailored Student Safety Plan.

PART C: RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS

13. Serious Incidents – De-escalation

It is important for staff to be up to date with effective de-escalation strategies, both for individual students as part of their BSP and for the student population more generally.

Under certain circumstances, a school may be required to respond to a serious incident presented by a student. This can occur:

- with a student who has been supported and monitored per the continuum and is receiving intensive intervention
- as a one-off incident with a student who has no prior history of requiring support and/or intervention.

Strategies for de-escalation

It is important that staff are trained to recognise when a student's behaviour is escalating and to have a planned response. The actions taken are critical in minimising behaviours of concern and risks to the student and others.

Staff need to be able to identify triggers and be attentive to the early signs of escalation so that they can implement effective de-escalation strategies. For students with a BSP, such known triggers and early signs should be clearly documented.

For all students, staff should be aware that some general indicators of escalation of behaviour may include:

- sudden changes in expression, physical activity, posture or appearance
- dramatic increase or change in the volume or tone of voice
- silences, breathlessness or sighs
- challenges or resistance to authority
- withdrawal from engagement in normal interactions and activities
- verbal threats to harm self, others or property.

Staff need to know when and how to act when the student is showing signs of agitation but the behaviour is not yet posing imminent risk of harm. In some cases, where a pattern of escalating behaviours has been noted, the strategies to be employed will be clearly documented in the BSP. Staff should also be aware of more general de-escalation strategies. Training staff in the use of such strategies is likely to increase the confidence of staff to use them effectively.

Key de-escalation strategies may include:

- remaining calm and speaking in a lowered tone of voice
- distracting the student may be helpful in some cases
- providing short, positive instructions, indicating what they should do (not what they should stop doing), e.g. 'Take a mini break' or 'Move to your safe place'
- moving slowly and being careful to maintain a non-threatening stance
- allowing reasonable personal space and not attempting to touch or stand near the student
- using non-verbal cues, particularly where these have been established.

If the student moves to a safe area, allow them to 'cool off' prior to seeking to engage in conversation. There may be pre-arranged 'cooling off' strategies that the student is aware of and is able to employ to self-calm, e.g. moving to the 'safe place', employing breathing strategies, etc.

Where the de-escalation strategies result in a reduction in the student's level of agitation, staff should monitor the calming process and allow the student time to continue to calm. It is important to limit any further actions or changes to the environment that may cause re-escalation.

14. Incident Management

When managing a serious incident, safety is the number one priority. Schools need clear processes that outline actions during and after an incident. Safety is of paramount importance in any incident management response and will encompass the safety of the student concerned, other students and staff members.

Where the de-escalation strategies do not have the desired effect and the behaviours place the student or others at risk of imminent harm, the strategies employed will need to move from a de-escalation approach to one of incident management.

Enacting incident response processes

The processes for incident management should be clearly documented in the school's Emergency Management Plan and Behaviour Support Policy. Principals should review the Emergency Management Plan to ensure that it is applicable for situations where student behaviour places the student or others at risk of harm. All staff should have a solid understanding of the processes so that they are able to respond quickly.

Key actions generally include the following:

- seek assistance from other members of staff
- follow a process for alerting leadership
- move students in the vicinity away from any perceived risk
- remove from the vicinity any objects that may be of concern, where possible.

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, staff may also be required to:

- enact a lockdown or evacuation per the school's processes
- contact emergency services personnel (police or ambulance).

Post-incident response

Once calm has been restored/the incident is over, the principal/school leadership should:

- provide immediate support to staff and students (e.g. organise medical checks, ensure basic needs are met, offer reassurance, monitor as required, give an opportunity to calm down)
- contact the student's parents as soon as possible
- consult with your relevant diocesan representative, where deemed necessary to determine the next phase of response
- contact other parents, where required by circumstances (e.g. if other students were affected). In rare situations, the principal may need to release a general communication.

Principals are advised to discuss any general communication with their principal consultant/education consultant and/or other relevant Catholic Education Office staff.

Report and document the incident

The principal has a range of reporting and documenting responsibilities after a serious incident, including:

- ensuring the incident is reported to WorkSafe if any staff required hospitalisation or medical treatment by a doctor
- asking all staff involved to provide the principal with a written record of their involvement or observations
- ensuring that a report of the incident is prepared for the school's accident/incident register. The School Injury/Incident Report form is located on the CEVN website <https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au> under Staffing & IR / School Injury Incident Report Form
- providing a copy of the completed Injury/Incident Report to diocesan personnel
- ensuring that accurate student records detailing the incident are placed in the student's file
- advising any staff injured during the incident of their entitlements under WorkCover
- completing a Record of Restraint/Seclusion, if relevant (see 'Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools' page 30).

Post-incident support

It is important for the principal to consider how best to support both staff and students following an incident, including:

- providing ongoing support to staff and students. Where the incident has caused distress, further avenues of support may be required, such as debriefing and access to counselling or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- considering the approach to be taken with the student/s, e.g. restorative practices, sanctions.

Review processes

After a serious incident, it is essential that all aspects of the school's management of the incident be reviewed. As a result of such review, existing procedures and systems may need to be adjusted in order to reduce the risk of similar or repeated incidents in the future. As part of the review, the principal should, in conjunction with relevant staff:

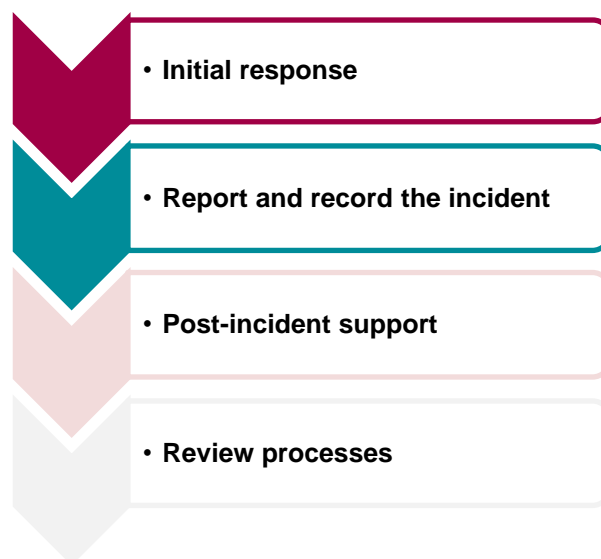
- ensure the school's health and safety representatives (if any) have been informed of the incident and are involved in evaluating the school's response

- evaluate all aspects of the school's risk assessment and management process. A fresh risk assessment should be conducted. The school may need to implement additional measures to eliminate or control risks to health or safety
- review the effectiveness of general school policies and processes such as the school's Emergency Management Plan and Behaviour Support Policy. Where relevant, these processes/policies should be updated and any changes communicated to staff and parents
- assess the effectiveness of the student's BSP and Student Safety Plan. If the student does not have a BSP and/or a Student Safety Plan, consider whether these should be developed. Review/development of a BSP should be done in consultation with the student's parents and, if appropriate, the student. This process includes considering the underlying cause or purpose of the behaviour that led to the incident, the supportive practices that worked well for the student, the key elements that led to the escalation or challenged the student, and further adjustments or supports that could prevent a repetition of the event
- evaluate the efficacy of emergency response equipment and systems and, where needed, upgrade and/or expand plant
- consider the training needs of staff and whether they would benefit from additional training or information in areas relevant to emergency management or the particular incident, e.g. de-escalation strategies or the needs of the particular student.

Further information

For further information regarding incident management, contact the Catholic Education Office in your diocese. CECV's *Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines (Occupational Violence)* (2014b) and the Victorian Department of Education and Training resource 'Responding to challenging behaviour' (n.d.(a)) may also benefit schools.

Incident management process



Post-incident Checklist for Principals

The Post-incident Checklist for Principals is a useful tool to ensure principals meet all their obligations following a serious incident.

15. Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

The use of restraint or seclusion does not form part of a BSP or a Student Safety Plan and should not be identified as an appropriate intervention. Restraint and seclusion are permitted only in limited emergency situations, as outlined below.

As emphasised throughout these guidelines, effective support for students exhibiting complex and unsafe behaviour requires a holistic response which includes appropriate and targeted interventions, specialised support and the development and implementation of a BSP and, if necessary, a Student Safety Plan. Restraint and seclusion should not form part of such planned responses.

Policy and legislative context

This section on the use of restraint and seclusion reflects the values of Catholic education in respecting the dignity of each person, building inclusive, supportive and caring relationships, fostering compassion and forgiveness, and promoting the practice of respectful behaviour. It recognises that all students have a right to be safe and free from abuse.

CECV's *Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines (Occupational Violence)* (2014b) provides advice on managing potential or actual occupational violence within schools and addresses matters such as preventative practices, intervention practices, appropriate incident responses and post-incident responsibilities.

The information provided in this section draws substantially on the policies and guidelines of the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) regarding restraint and seclusion of students. The CECV endorses the direction outlined in the DET publication *The Principles for Reduction and Elimination of Restraint and Seclusion in Victorian Government Schools* (Victorian Department of Education and Training 2017).

This section is influenced by and compliant with the following legislation:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic.) (OHS Act).

Also relevant to this section is the concept of duty of care. All teachers and schools owe students a duty of care, meaning they must take reasonable steps to ensure that their acts or omissions do not cause reasonably foreseeable injury to their students. Failure to do so could amount to negligence.

In addition to their duty of care towards students, employers have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety of their staff. This is reflected in the OHS Act which requires the employer

to provide and maintain, so far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. School staff also have obligations under the OHS Act to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace.

Application

This section on the use of restraint and seclusion applies to all students in Victorian Catholic schools, including primary, secondary and special schools. It applies not only to students who have previously been identified as exhibiting complex/unsafe behaviour, but also to students who have a 'one-off' episode of complex/unsafe behaviour.

Restraint and seclusion explained

Restraint

In this document, unless otherwise stated, 'restraint' refers to 'physical restraint'. Physical restraint is the use of force to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of their body where the student is not free to move away.

Restraint does not include 'protective physical interventions', which involve physical contact to block, deflect or redirect a student's actions, or disengage from a student's grip. In these situations, the student remains free to move away. In general, the same approach to incident management, reporting and review will apply to an incident involving a protective physical intervention as to an incident involving restraint.

Seclusion

Seclusion is the solitary confinement of a person in a room or area from which their exit is prevented by a barrier or another person. Seclusion includes situations where a person is left alone in a room or area and reasonably believes they cannot leave that room or area even if they may physically be able to (e.g. the door is not locked). In extreme circumstances, e.g. in response to behaviours that cause harm to self or others, teachers will respond by exiting the other students from the learning space to ensure their safety. Where the student continues to display threatening and dangerous behaviour (e.g. wielding a bat), staff will seek to limit harm to others by isolating the student for the minimum amount of time required for the student to calm.

Seclusion does not include safe place, time out or chill out rooms, being conditions that are set up to support the student (see below).

Safe place, time out, chill out rooms

The practice of using a safe place, quiet place, time out or chill out room (referred to as 'safe place' in this section) for students does not amount to seclusion and is used in different situations from seclusion.

Having a student go to their safe place is a practice used in schools to support students who require a break from a stressful or demanding situation, often when their behaviour is escalating. Exit to a safe place is a planned intervention to be used as part of an overall approach to supporting a student exhibiting complex behaviour. The use of a safe place should form part of a student's BSP and/or Student Safety Plan. It is used to assist students

to settle and return to a state of calm, so they are more actively able to participate academically and socially. The use of a safe place can be either teacher-directed or self-directed and takes place in a setting that is not locked.

Schools must ensure their use of a safe place is in the context of a therapeutic educational strategy and not as a form of seclusion.

Use of restraint and/or seclusion

Every effort should be made to prevent the need for the use of restraint or seclusion. While this section outlines the limited circumstances in which restraint or seclusion may be appropriate, it is important to remember that prevention is the best strategy. In making a decision that any form of restraint or seclusion is required, staff should be aware that their actions may directly increase the risk of injury and trauma, both for the student and for the staff member.

Three conditions

Restraint and seclusion must not be used except in an emergency situation that satisfies the following three conditions:

1. The student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm or danger.
2. The action is reasonable in all the circumstances.
3. There is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

1. Imminent threat of physical harm

The first condition is that the student's behaviour must pose an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the student or to others.

A verbal threat from a student would not usually be sufficient to meet this condition unless there is an associated risk of imminent harm. For example, the first condition would be satisfied where a student is threatening to hit someone with a cricket bat and is holding the cricket bat. Where a student is making verbal threats but the staff member does not believe there is a risk of imminent harm, the staff member should still take appropriate action but this should not include restraint or seclusion.

The physical harm or danger must be to the student (i.e. self-harm) or to another person (e.g. staff or another student). Damage to property alone is not sufficient to meet this condition. For example, if a student is graffitiing a classroom, the first condition is not satisfied. However, if a student is breaking windows and putting nearby students at risk of imminent harm from the broken glass, the first condition may be satisfied.

2. Reasonable in the circumstances

The second condition is that it must be reasonable in all the circumstances to restrain or seclude the student. 'Reasonable' is taken to mean proportionate and necessary. Staff should consider whether the restraint/seclusion is proportionate to the harm it is intended to prevent. For example, it may be considered reasonable to restrain a student in response to an

imminent attack with a cricket bat, but it would generally be considered unreasonable and not justified to restrain a student in response to low-level pushing.

What is considered reasonable depends on the individual circumstances of each case and is a matter for professional judgment. When making the decision as to whether restraint or seclusion is reasonable, staff need to take account of all the circumstances, including:

- the student's age, grade and developmental level
- the student's physical presentation – weight and stature
- the relevance of any disability, impairment (including psychological conditions) or medical condition
- the mental state of the student
- the anticipated response of the student
- the impact of the restraint on the relationship with the student
- the environment in which restraint/seclusion is taking place, including any specific hazards
- the form of restraint/seclusion that would be appropriate.

In general, responding to behaviour with restraint or seclusion on a regular or long-term basis would not be considered reasonable. In the example above, it may be considered reasonable to restrain the student with the cricket bat on the first occasion. However, after the first incident, the school has become aware of the risk and should put in place other strategies to prevent reoccurrence. Continuing to restrain the student in response to a second and third occurrence becomes less reasonable in the circumstances.

3. No less restrictive means of responding

The third condition is that there must be no less restrictive means of responding to the student's behaviour in the circumstances. This means that restraint or seclusion must be used only as a last resort, when all less-restrictive alternatives have been exhausted. This does not mean that the staff member must have tried every other available alternative, but that they have considered the options and judged that the alternatives were less likely to succeed in the circumstances. For example, this condition would not be satisfied if, instead of restraint, a verbal direction would have sufficed to prevent the imminent harm.

In the event that restraint or seclusion is used, the least restrictive form of restraint/seclusion must be used for the minimum time possible. The restraint/seclusion should cease as soon as the immediate danger for the student or others is averted. For example, the third condition would be satisfied where a teacher grabs a student's arm to prevent them running in front of a car and releases the student's arm once the danger has passed. If, in the same circumstances, the teacher tackled the student to the ground and held them there for five minutes, the third condition is unlikely to be met.

Dynamic risk assessment

The decision to use restraint or seclusion rests with a teacher's professional judgment. Such decisions are usually required to be made in times of high stress. Staff are encouraged to pause and conduct a 'dynamic risk assessment', that is, make an on-the-spot assessment of the likely outcomes of the available options before deciding which to choose (Team-Teach Asia-Pacific 2017).

Monitoring during restraint/seclusion

Whenever restraint or seclusion is used, staff must monitor the student continuously to ensure that the restraint or seclusion is being used appropriately. This includes ensuring that the student, other students and staff are safe and that the restraint or seclusion is still necessary. Restraint/seclusion should be discontinued when the imminent threat of harm has passed, the action is no longer reasonable in the circumstances or a less restrictive means of responding becomes available.

Throughout an incident of restraint, staff should continue to engage with the student in a calm and measured way. They should explain why the restraint is being applied and that it will cease once the student is no longer a danger to themselves or others. In every instance of restraint, breathing must be visually monitored.

If a student is placed in a separate room as a means of seclusion, staff must maintain appropriate supervision of the student.

When restraint/seclusion should not be used

Behaviour management, punishment etc.

Restraint or seclusion must not be included in a BSP and must not be used as a routine behaviour management technique or routine first response. Rooms or areas designed specifically for seclusion or used primarily for seclusion are not permitted.

Restraint or seclusion should not be used to punish or discipline a student and should never be used as a convenience.

Unless the three conditions above are satisfied, restraint/seclusion should not be used:

- to respond to a class/school disruption
- to maintain good order
- as a response to:
 - a student's refusal to comply
 - verbal threats from a student
 - a student leaving the classroom/school without permission
 - property destruction caused by a student.

Dangerous forms of restraint

Staff should not use any form of restraint which covers the student's mouth or nose, restricts breathing, takes the student to the ground into the prone (lying face down) or supine (lying face up) position, involves the hyperextension of joints or application of pressure to the neck, chest or joints. Such actions could result in serious injury or death and would be justified only as a last resort in a life-threatening emergency. There will almost always be a less restrictive means of responding.

Mechanical and chemical restraints

Mechanical restraint refers to the use of a device to prevent, restrict or subdue a person's movement for the primary purpose of influencing that person's behaviour. Mechanical restraint in this context does not include devices prescribed by an appropriate professional and used for approved purposes, e.g. vehicle safety restraints used as intended to safely transport a student in a vehicle or orthopedically prescribed devices that enable a student to safely participate in activities.

Chemical restraint refers to the use of medication primarily to control or subdue behaviour and which is not being used to treat an underlying physical or mental illness or a physical condition.

Schools should not use mechanical or chemical restraints as a means of controlling student behaviour in an emergency situation. Such action would not be considered reasonable in a school setting. There would almost always be less restrictive means of responding.

Incident management

The processes that apply for managing serious incidents more generally should be invoked in any situation involving restraint or seclusion (see 'Incident Management' page 26 and 'Post-incident Checklist for Principals' page 57). Such processes should be documented in the school's Emergency Management Plan and Behaviour Support Policy. The number one priority when managing such an incident should be the safety of all concerned. Staff involved in an incident of restraint or seclusion must immediately notify the principal.

As with any serious incident, the principal must contact the student's parents as soon as possible following any incident of restraint or seclusion. The principal is advised to document that the parents have been notified. Depending on the circumstances, the principal may also need to contact other parents.

Post-incident support

Incidents involving restraint or seclusion are often particularly traumatic or stressful for those involved. The principal should consider the wellbeing of all staff and students following the incident, and the need for any additional support:

- For the student who was restrained or secluded, this may include counselling, discussions in the PSG or participation in the review of their BSP.
- For staff, this may include debriefing in relation to the incident, access to the EAP, counselling or professional development.

- Other students who were involved or witnessed the incident may benefit from debriefing in relation to the incident or counselling.

Reporting and reviewing use of restraint and seclusion

Reporting and recording requirements

After any incident of restraint or seclusion, schools must follow the reporting and recording requirements for serious incidents (see 'Incident Management' page 26 and 'Post-incident Checklist for Principals' page 57).

Notably, principals should ensure that a Record of Restraint/Seclusion is completed (see 'Record of Restraint/Seclusion Template' page 55). Clear documentation of such incidents will assist schools to collect and analyse data to be used in the review process with the aim of reducing the use of restraint and seclusion. When documenting an incident of restraint or seclusion, it is important to record not only the use of restraint/seclusion but the elements that led to the escalation of behaviour and the steps taken to attempt to de-escalate the situation. The record should also explain why the restraint/seclusion was necessary in the particular circumstances. The principal should retain a copy of the Record of Restraint/Seclusion for the school and provide a copy to diocesan personnel.

Finally, the principal will need to consider whether the use of restraint or seclusion amounts to 'reportable conduct' and therefore needs to be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People under the Reportable Conduct Scheme (see 'Interaction with the Reportable Conduct Scheme' page 45 and 'Post-incident Checklist for Principals' page 57).

Review of processes

As with any serious incident, the use of restraint or seclusion should trigger a review of relevant school processes (including the Behaviour Support Policy and Emergency Management Plan) and the student's BSP and Student Safety Plan. See the steps outlined under 'Incident Management' on page 26.

After an incident of restraint or seclusion, it is particularly important to assess the student's BSP and Student Safety Plan and modify as appropriate to proactively prevent further use of restraint or seclusion. If the student does not have a BSP and/or a Student Safety Plan, consider whether these should be developed. Review or development of a BSP should be done in consultation with the student's parents and, if appropriate, the student. This process includes considering:

- the underlying cause or purpose of the behaviour that led to the restraint/seclusion
- the supportive practices and strategies that worked well for the student
- the key elements that led to the escalation
- further adjustments or supports that could prevent a repetition of the event leading to restraint/seclusion.

After an incident of restraint or seclusion, it will also be important to review the training needs of staff, not only those involved in the incident but all staff.

Staff training

It is essential for schools to train and build the capacity of their staff to deal with unsafe situations. Teachers and relevant school staff should be trained regularly on the appropriate use of effective alternatives to physical restraint or seclusion, such as PBS. This includes training on recognising when student behaviour is escalating and how to take appropriate steps to de-escalate the situation. Depending on the circumstances, staff may also benefit from training and/or information on understanding behavioural disorders and other behaviours associated with particular disabilities and/or mental health conditions.

It is advisable for staff to receive training on the safe use of restraint, particularly when there is a reasonably foreseeable likelihood that restraint will be required. All staff should have a thorough understanding of the limited circumstances in which restraint or seclusion are appropriate. In an emergency situation, the decision whether to use restraint or seclusion rests with the professional judgment of the staff involved. Staff need to have sufficient training and knowledge of this area to be able to exercise good judgment in an emergency situation, taking into account both their duty of care to the students and their duty to ensure their own safety.

In all situations, where reasonable and practicable, restraint should be applied only by staff who have been trained by an appropriate provider. Schools seeking to engage an external provider to deliver training are asked to make contact with the Catholic Education Office in their diocese.

Further information

Further information regarding the use of restraint can be found in *The Principles for Reduction and Elimination of Restraint and Seclusion in Victorian Government Schools* (Victorian Department of Education and Training 2017).

The DET has issued detailed guidance to assist government school staff with responding to violent and dangerous student behaviours. Available on its website under 'Restraint and seclusion' (Victorian Department of Education and Training n.d.(b)), the materials include information about legal obligations, resources for training and fact sheets for parents.

Record of Restraint/Seclusion Template

Schools are advised to use a standard form for reporting incidents of restraint/seclusion such as the Record of Restraint/Seclusion Template. This document can be tailored to individual school situations, e.g. to include additional unsafe behaviours presented at school or additional strategies used by staff at school.

16. Responding to Students Running away from School

When dealing with a student who has run away from school, the approach will differ depending on the student, but the focus should be on ensuring their safety.

Staff may be faced with a situation where a student leaves the school grounds without permission or, if outside school grounds (e.g. on an excursion), leaves the school activity without permission.

For some students, the risk of absconding may have been identified in the student's BSP and/or Student Safety Plan. Ideally, those documents outline strategies to avoid the student's behaviour escalating to the point of running away. They should also outline strategies for use if preventative measures are unsuccessful and the student absconds. Other students may have had no previous history of absconding or no previous history of complex or unsafe behaviour. Staff need to have a solid understanding of how best to respond both for specific students and more generally. Ideally, staff should consider what they would do before the situation arises.

This section draws on DET policy titled 'Students Running Away From School' (Victorian Department of Education and Training 2017).

Underlying principles

When responding to students running away from school, the underlying principle is duty of care. All teachers and schools must take reasonable steps to ensure their acts or omissions do not cause reasonably foreseeable injury to their students. If a student runs away from school, staff must do what they can (within reason) to prevent the student from being harmed. Staff also need to be mindful of their duty of care towards other students and their obligations to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others in the workplace. In short, the focus should be on safety – that of the student concerned, other students, the staff member and other staff.

Enact incident response process

A student running away from school may constitute a serious incident, meaning that staff should respond in accordance with the school's Emergency Management Plan and Behaviour Support Policy. Given the speed with which such incidents may develop, staff need to be familiar with these processes. The general processes that apply for managing serious incidents are outlined under 'Incident Management' on page 26.

Of particular importance in this situation are the following actions:

- seek assistance from other members of staff (e.g. a teacher may ask the teacher in an adjoining classroom to supervise their class while they attend to the student who has absconded)
- follow the documented process for alerting leadership

- contact emergency services personnel depending on the seriousness of the situation (e.g. contact Victoria Police if there are concerns for the safety of the student or others)
- contact the student's parents as soon as reasonably possible.

Where a student has run away from school, the school needs to take all reasonable steps to discharge the duty of care owed to that student. The reasonable steps to be taken will vary and depend on the individual student and circumstances. Staff need to exercise their professional judgment in taking into account relevant considerations and deciding the best approach in the circumstances.

Considerations

There are a number of considerations that staff should take into account when determining what steps are reasonable in the circumstances, including the following (as adapted from [DET](#)):

- the location of the school (or school activity) and its proximity to external dangers such as busy roads or railway lines
- whether the student has a disability that may affect their ability to appreciate the risk associated with their behaviour and actions
- the age of the student
- the student's prior behaviour or previously exhibited vulnerabilities, difficulties or troubles
- the student's mental state immediately prior to leaving the school, i.e. whether they were highly distressed, drug or alcohol affected or had indicated an intention to hurt themselves or others
- the time that has elapsed since the student left the school
- whether other students who are under the care and supervision of the school staff can be appropriately supervised while appropriate action is taken to manage the student who has run away from school.

Possible strategies

Depending on the individual circumstances of the case, the reasonable steps to be taken may include one or more of the following (as adapted from [DET](#)):

- contacting Victoria Police to advise them of the missing student and the particular age, disability, vulnerabilities or mental state of the individual student
- contacting the parent of the student to advise them that the student has left the school and to obtain any additional information and assistance that may help in locating the student
- searching for the student, particularly if there is information available as to the student's potential whereabouts

- following the student (this may be at a distance) and maintaining visual contact until the student returns to school or is in the company of the police or a parent (remember that children often stop running if they are not being chased)
- making contact with the student and encouraging them to return to school, go to a safe place, stop the behaviour that is putting them at risk or remain in the company of a suitable and responsible adult
- restraining the student if appropriate (see below). For example, where the student is about to step in front of a car or otherwise harm themselves.

Use of restraint

Many people's immediate response to a student running away from school is to chase the student and physically force them to return to school. However, in order for physical restraint to be justified in response to a student running away from school, the situation must meet the three conditions discussed on page 32 (see 'Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools').

Restraint and seclusion must not be used except in an emergency situation that satisfies the following three conditions:

1. The student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm or danger.
2. The action is reasonable in all the circumstances.
3. There is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

The restraint or seclusion should be discontinued as soon as the immediate danger has passed.

Often, the situation of a student absconding from school will not meet these conditions because:

- there may not be an imminent threat of physical harm
- restraining the student might not be considered reasonable in the circumstances
- there may be less restrictive ways of responding.

There are situations where restraint is justified, e.g. a student runs toward a busy road and the teacher grabs the student's arm for no longer than is necessary to ensure the student's safety. However, restraint should not be an automatic response to a student running away. Staff need to consider the best strategy in the circumstances and ask themselves whether restraint is necessary.

Post-incident

Following the incident, the school should continue to work through the incident response process (see 'Incident Management' page 26 and 'Post-incident Checklist for Principals' page 57), including:

- offering post-incident support to staff and students

- reporting and recording the incident as relevant in their particular diocese
- reviewing processes as relevant (including updating/developing the student's BSP and/or Student Safety Plan).

If staff applied restraint to the student at any stage, principals should ensure the Record of Restraint/Seclusion is completed.

The principal should also consider whether any actions of staff during the incident constituted reportable conduct (see 'Interaction with the Reportable Conduct Scheme' page 45). For example, use of restraint could amount to physical violence against the student and failure to take action where a student has absconded could amount to significant neglect.

17. Responding to Physical Altercations between Students

When responding to a physical altercation or fight between students, the focus should be on the safety of all concerned. There is no 'one size fits all' response, staff must use their professional judgment according to the circumstances.

School staff should protect the safety of all students (including the student at risk of causing physical harm to self or others), themselves and other staff. Any intervention should be reasonable and proportionate to the situation, and have regard for the dignity of all.

Consistent with these guidelines, staff should follow the school Behaviour Support Policy and attempt to de-escalate any situation that may result in a physical altercation. If the student/s involved have a BSP or Student Safety Plan, appropriate strategies should be outlined in those documents. If the student/s have no history of complex or unsafe behaviour, general approaches should be used. Where de-escalation is unsuccessful or there is no opportunity for de-escalation (e.g. staff are alerted to a fight on the school yard), staff need to use their professional judgment as to how best to respond, taking into account the information below.

Underlying principles

When responding to a physical altercation between students, staff need to be mindful of their duty of care. In the context of a physical fight, this requires teachers to take reasonable steps to prevent students from harm – in a fight situation, such harm is likely to be reasonably foreseeable. Staff also need to be mindful of their duty of care towards other students and their obligation to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others in the workplace. When it comes to responding to a physical altercation, staff must balance their duty of care to the students with their duty to take reasonable care for their own safety. The focus on safety does not only mean the safety of students, but also the safety of staff members.

Enact incident response process

Depending on the situation, a physical altercation between students may constitute a serious incident, meaning that staff should respond in accordance with the school's Emergency Management Plan and Behaviour Support Policy. Such incidents call for immediate action, so staff need to be able to apply processes automatically. The general processes that apply for managing serious incidents are outlined under 'Incident Management' on page 26.

Of particular importance in this situation are the following actions:

- seek assistance from other members of staff
- follow the documented process for alerting leadership
- move students who are in the vicinity away from any perceived risk
- remove objects from the vicinity that may be of concern where possible

- contact emergency services personnel if the situation is sufficiently serious (e.g. police or ambulance).

Beyond the basic approach, the specific action taken by staff should be primarily focused on safety and will depend on what is reasonable in the circumstances. This includes taking account of the students' age, size, any disability or relevant medical conditions and the surrounding environment (e.g. if the fight is taking place near the edge of a balcony).

Intervening in fights

Staff must use their professional judgment to determine the best response in the circumstances to a fight between students and whether this involves intervention. Intervention does not always have to be physical intervention and may include verbal intervention or physically approaching students. Physical intervention may include protective physical interventions (e.g. deflecting the student while allowing them to move away) as well as restraint (see below).

The stereotypical depiction of a single teacher physically positioning themselves between two sizeable students to break up a fight is often not the best response. This places the teacher at significant risk of harm and would generally not be considered a reasonable response.

Likewise, the equally prevalent image of two teachers, each physically restraining a student in order to break up a fight, is not necessarily the best course of action. In addition to the risk of harm to the teachers, staff must assess whether physical restraint is justified in the circumstances (see 'Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools' page 30).

Restraint and seclusion must not be used except in an emergency situation that satisfies the following three conditions:

1. The student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm or danger.
2. The action is reasonable in all the circumstances.
3. There is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

The restraint or seclusion should be discontinued as soon as the immediate danger has passed.

There may be situations where all three conditions are met and use of restraint is justified. However, there may also be situations where the action is not reasonable (e.g. the restraint is out of proportion to behaviour such as mild pushing) or there may be less restrictive ways of responding (e.g. verbal intervention). Even in a fight situation, restraint is a last resort not a first response.

Post-incident

Following the incident, the school should continue to work through the incident response process (see 'Incident Management' page 26 and 'Post-incident Checklist for Principals' page 57), including:

- offering post-incident support to staff and students

- reporting and recording the incident as relevant
- reviewing processes as relevant.

If staff applied restraint to the student/s, principals should ensure the Record of Restraint/Seclusion is completed.

The principal should also consider whether any actions of staff during the incident constituted reportable conduct (see 'Interaction with the Reportable Conduct Scheme' page 45). For example, use of restraint could amount to physical violence against the student and failure to take any action could amount to significant neglect.

18. Interaction with the Reportable Conduct Scheme

The application of restraint or seclusion may amount to 'reportable conduct'. While this does not change what is permitted behaviour, it does reinforce the need to focus on preventative measures as part of PBS.

Staff should be mindful that some actions taken in response to complex and unsafe behaviour, including restraint and seclusion, could amount to reportable conduct under the scheme established under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic.). Reportable conduct must be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People. The Reportable Conduct Scheme does not change what behaviour is and is not permitted in schools. What it does is add an extra layer of reporting when such conduct occurs.

There are five types of reportable conduct:

- sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of a child)
- sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of a child)
- physical violence (against, with or in the presence of a child)
- behaviour that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm
- significant neglect.

The last three bullet points are most likely to be relevant to situations described in these guidelines.

Physical violence

Restraint of a student may amount to physical violence if the restraint is inappropriate or excessive force is used. This includes situations where a student is restrained to stop them running away from school or where excessive force is used to break up a fight between students.

The Commission for Children and Young People has clarified that physical violence does not include lawful behaviour, for example reasonable steps taken to protect a child from immediate harm, such as taking a child's arm to stop them from going into oncoming traffic.

Behaviour likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm

Some actions in response to complex and unsafe behaviour, including restraint and seclusion, could amount to conduct that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm to a student. The Reportable Conduct Scheme is concerned only with allegations that are 'significant'. This means the alleged conduct must be 'more than trivial or insignificant'. Whether an action meets this criteria will depend on all the circumstances.

Significant neglect

Reportable conduct also covers situations of 'significant neglect'. Staff should be aware that in some circumstances, failure to act could amount to neglect, e.g. failing to take action when a vulnerable student runs away from school. To constitute reportable conduct, the neglect must be significant, i.e. 'more than trivial or insignificant'.

What does this mean for staff dealing with unsafe behaviour?

It can be difficult for staff to manage students with unsafe behaviour particularly when responding to serious incidents. In some situations, there is a fine line between appropriate use of restraint and reportable conduct. This is why PBS is crucial. The emphasis must be on developing prevention strategies and replacing undesirable conduct with socially acceptable behaviour. Through development of BSPs, risk assessments and Student Safety Plans, staff should have considered all reasonably likely situations relating to a student, the most appropriate ways to de-escalate a situation and, if de-escalation is unsuccessful, how to respond.

There will still be times when staff are faced with serious incidents. It may be that de-escalation strategies have not worked, the staff member in the situation is not familiar with the student or the student has not previously exhibited unsafe behaviour. This is why staff training is essential. All staff need to have sufficient training to enable them to use their professional judgment to make sound decisions in an emergency situation.

Further information

For further information regarding the Reportable Conduct Scheme, including reporting obligations on principals and employers, see the Commission for Children and Young People website <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>.

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APPENDIX: RESOURCES AND TEMPLATES

- Behaviour Support Plan Template
- Behaviour Support Policy Template
- Student Safety Plan Template (A & B)
- Record of Restraint/Seclusion Template
- Post-incident Checklist for Principals
- Risk Assessment Tool

Behaviour Support Plan Template

STUDENT:

YEAR LEVEL:

START DATE:

COORDINATOR:

This plan is committed to supporting the student in developing skills required for positive social interaction, in order to become a more successful learner and to create a safe learning environment for all.

<p>BACKGROUND: Brief summary of key information/factors that may be having an impact on the student.</p> <p><i>Considerations may include: environmental, developmental and health factors (including medication/sleep difficulties), learning strengths and challenges (including formal assessment results/reports), cultural and social factors, experience of trauma, diagnosis of disability/disorder.</i></p>	
<p>TARGET BEHAVIOUR: The behaviour of concern that the support team wants to change. (This may be a behaviour/skill that occurs either more frequently than desired or less frequently than desired.)</p> <p><i>Describe the form of the behaviour in observable and measurable terms, stating what the student says or does, e.g. student runs out of the classroom three or more times each day, student yells out 'I don't want' and throws task materials onto the floor.</i></p> <p><i>N.B. Avoid subjective descriptions/terms.</i></p>	
<p>TRIGGERS: The immediate antecedent or setting events/contexts/routines that directly or indirectly increase the likelihood of the target behaviour occurring.</p> <p><i>Examples of triggers include: environmental stimuli e.g. noise level, changes to schedule, transitions, non-preferred tasks, interaction with/proximity to individuals, social/auditory/academic requests made of student, conflict at school.</i></p>	
<p>FUNCTION: What is the student trying to gain or avoid as a result of the target behaviour?</p> <p><i>Common functions of problem behaviour may lead to a student: <u>gaining</u> peer attention/interaction, adult attention/interaction, a desired activity/object/item, sensory input; or <u>avoiding</u> a non-preferred/difficult/boring/easy task/activity, attention/interaction/proximity to peers/adults, non-preferred/uncomfortable sensory experience.</i></p> <p><i>A summary statement can read: 'When _____ happens, the student does _____ and as a result (gains/avoids) _____.'</i></p>	

<p>SIGNS/INDICATORS: Student’s expression/body language/statement prior to demonstration of behaviour.</p> <p><i>Write a statement that describes the student just prior to the problem behaviour. Examples of common signs/indicators include: face becomes red, voice becomes louder, student moves around the learning area.</i></p>	
<p>GOAL: What replacement behaviour is desired? What behaviour is socially acceptable and serves the same function as the target (problem) behaviour?</p> <p><i>Write a SMART goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-referenced), e.g. ‘For X to calmly transition between activities using verbal and visual cues 80% of the time after 6 weeks.’</i></p> <p><i>The <u>targeted learning outcome</u> for the student is ‘to calmly transition between activities’. The <u>conditions</u> in which this targeted outcome will occur are ‘using verbal and visual cues’ and the <u>criterion</u> is ‘80% of the time after 6 weeks’.</i></p>	
<p>PROACTIVE INTERVENTIONS: Aimed specifically at assisting the student to demonstrate the alternative/replacement behaviour (goal).</p> <p><i>Include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i><u>prevention</u> interventions (adjustments) to modify antecedents that trigger the target behaviour</i> • <i>interventions to <u>teach</u> and prompt the replacement behaviour</i> • <i>interventions to <u>reinforce</u> the replacement behaviour (initially approximations to the goal).</i> 	
<p>IMPLEMENTED BY: Specify staff who will be responsible.</p>	
<p>EVALUATION: Specify how the goal will be monitored and over what timeframe.</p> <p><i>Consider what data will be collected and analysed.</i></p>	
<p>ONGOING ADJUSTMENTS: What adjustments will be implemented consistently, in order to best support the student (e.g. ‘chill out room’)?</p>	

REVIEW DATE OF PLAN	
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I have read this plan and commit to its implementation.

TEAM MEMBER	ROLE	TEAM MEMBER	ROLE

Behaviour Support Policy Template

RATIONALE

Explains succinctly why the policy is being written and makes specific connections to the school's vision.

- School mission and vision
- Rights and responsibilities
- School values

AIMS

Describes the general intent of what the policy is intended to achieve.

- Teaching and learning
- Safe learning environments

IMPLEMENTATION

Details how the aims of the policy will be attained.

- Positive behaviour expectations
- Support systems
- Consequences for breaches

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Outlines the steps that will be taken following such an incident.

EVALUATION

States clearly when the policy will be reviewed.

Student Safety Plan Template (A)

STUDENT:

YEAR LEVEL:

DATE OF PLAN:

This plan is committed to supporting the student on occasions when their behaviour is escalating and especially where there is a risk of a serious incident occurring, such as threat of or actions that can cause physical harm or danger to the student or others.

Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the processes to be followed to achieve a consistent approach.

	PLANNED RESPONSES
POTENTIAL TRIGGER(S) FOR ESCALATING BEHAVIOUR: <i>The immediate antecedent or setting events/contexts/routines that increase the likelihood of problem behaviour occurring.</i>	<i>Learning space:</i> <i>Playground</i> <i>Other</i>
ACCELERATION/ESCALATION BEHAVIOURS: <i>The signs of escalating behaviour. These behaviours often precede the unsafe behaviour, e.g. increased questioning, arguing, inability/refusal to follow instructions/requests.</i>	<i>Learning space:</i> <i>Playground</i> <i>Other</i>
UNSAFE BEHAVIOURS (CRISIS EVENT): <i>The behaviours that require intervention for the safety and wellbeing of the student and others, e.g. physical aggression, property destruction, self-injury, running away/leaving supervised area.</i>	<i>Learning space:</i> <i>Playground</i> <i>Other</i>
DE-ESCALATION BEHAVIOURS: <i>The behaviours that indicate the student is calming.</i>	<i>Learning space:</i> <i>Playground</i> <i>Other</i>
RECOVERY: <i>The behaviours that indicate the student has 'de-escalated' and now appears calm.</i>	<i>Learning space:</i> <i>Playground</i> <i>Other</i>
POST-INCIDENT SCHOOL CONSIDERATIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refer to 'Incident Management' on page 26 revise Student Safety Plan and Behaviour Support Plan. 	

TEAM MEMBER	ROLE	TEAM MEMBER	ROLE

Student Safety Plan Template (B)

STUDENT:

YEAR LEVEL:

DATE OF PLAN:

This plan is committed to supporting the student on occasions when their behaviour is escalating and especially where there is a risk of a serious incident occurring, such as threat of or actions that can cause physical harm or danger to the student or others.

Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the processes to be followed to achieve a consistent approach.

POTENTIAL TRIGGER(S) FOR ESCALATING BEHAVIOUR: <i>The immediate antecedent or setting events/contexts/routines that increase the likelihood of problem behaviour occurring.</i>	ACCELERATION/ESCALATION BEHAVIOURS: <i>The signs of escalating behaviour. These behaviours often precede the unsafe behaviour, e.g. increased questioning, arguing, inability/refusal to follow instructions/requests.</i>	UNSAFE BEHAVIOURS (CRISIS EVENT): <i>The behaviours that require intervention for the safety and wellbeing of the student and others, e.g. physical aggression, property destruction, self-injury, running away/leaving supervised area.</i>	DE-ESCALATION BEHAVIOURS: <i>The behaviours that indicate the student is calming.</i>	RECOVERY: <i>The behaviours that indicate the student has 'de-escalated' and now appears calm.</i>
PLANNED RESPONSES:	PLANNED RESPONSES:	PLANNED RESPONSES:	PLANNED RESPONSES:	PLANNED RESPONSES:

POST-INCIDENT SCHOOL CONSIDERATIONS:

- refer to 'Incident Management' on page 26
- revise Student Safety Plan and Behaviour Support Plan.

I have read this plan and commit to its implementation.

TEAM MEMBER	ROLE	SIGNATURE	TEAM MEMBER	ROLE	SIGNATURE

Record of Restraint/Seclusion Template

This template is adapted from the Team-Teach Positive Handling Record, www.team-teach.com.au.

Date	Student			Age	Teacher		
Report compiler		Staff involved			Witnesses		
Location of incident				Duration of incident (minutes)			
BEHAVIOUR							
Intentional harming of self				Undressing self			
Intentional harming of adults				Sexualised behaviour to self			
Intentional harming of other students				Undressing others			
Potential damage to property leading to injury to self				Sexualised behaviour to others			
Potential damage to property leading to injury to others				Possession and likely use of weapon			
Absconding with risk of harm				Unintentional harm to self, others or property			
Verbal abuse with potential to lead to harm							
DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES USED PRIOR TO RESTRAINT/SECLUSION							
Verbal advice and support		Reminders of success		Voluntary move to a safer place			
Visuals offered		Distraction		Reassurance			
Planned ignoring		Contingent touch		Withdrawal offered			
Use of body language		Giving time/waiting		Involve a new person			
Withdrawal directed		Flexible negotiation		Humour			
Redirection		Limits set					
Choices offered		Change of adult(s)					
If none used, why not?							
Immediate danger of personal injury to student							
Immediate danger of injury to another student or adult							
Occurrence in a high-risk environment that will immediately jeopardise safety							
REASON THAT RESTRAINT/SECLUSION IS IN BEST INTERESTS OF THE STUDENT							
To avert an immediate danger of personal injury to the student							
To avert an immediate danger of injury to another student or adult							
To avoid serious damage that will immediately impact on the safety of others							
To prevent a criminal act that impacts on the safety of self or others							
POSITIVE HANDLING TECHNIQUES USED IN THE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION							
One person		Two person		Change of staff			
		Clear verbal/visual direction		Fix & stabilise			
Locate the 'gate'		Exit & move away		Guide/control elbows		Walking escort	
Standing		Kneeling		Sitting on chairs		Sitting on ground	
STUDENT RESPONSES							
To positive handling intervention:							
De-escalated quickly		De-escalated gradually		Calmed then re-escalated			
Escalated		Escalated repeatedly		Fatigued			
Focused on specific adult		Refocused on another adult					
Focused on specific student		Refocused on another student					
After positive handling intervention ceases:							
De-escalated quickly		De-escalated gradually		Calmed then re-escalated			
Escalated		Escalated repeatedly					
DETAILS OF ANY INJURIES							
Student:	Yes	No	Medical treatment needed?		Yes	No	
Give details:							
Staff:	Yes	No	Medical treatment needed?		Yes	No	
Give details:							

POST-INCIDENT DISCUSSION/DEBRIEF/SUPPORT FOR STAFF MEMBER/S	Yes		No	
Staff involved in debrief:				
BSP reviewed?	Yes		No	
BSP updated?	Yes		No	
New risk assessment conducted?	Yes		No	
Student Safety Plan reviewed?	Yes		No	
Student Safety Plan updated?	Yes		No	
Immediate actions arising from this incident:				
NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES				
<i>eduSafe</i> Incident Report submitted? (staff)	Yes		No	
Accident Form completed? (student)	Yes		No	
Incident reported to principal?	Yes		No	
Date: Time: By: Signed:				
Incident reported to parent/carer?	Yes		No	
Date: Time: By: To:				
(or attach copy of letter)				
This is a full and accurate record of events:				
Report compiler	Signed		Date	
Principal	Signed		Date	
Ensure this record is filed with student's information and can be accessed by administration staff if needed.				

Post-incident Checklist for Principals

Schools should ensure this checklist is consistent with the school's Emergency Management Plan, Behaviour Support Policy and any other relevant policies/procedures.

INITIAL RESPONSE

- Provide immediate support to staff (e.g. organise medical checks, ensure basic needs met, offer reassurance, monitor, give opportunity to calm down).
- Provide immediate support to student/s (e.g. organise medical checks, ensure basic needs met, offer reassurance, monitor, give opportunity to calm down).
- Contact the student's parents.
- Consult with principal consultant/education consultant at diocesan office regarding next phase.
- Contact other parents if relevant.

REPORT AND RECORD THE INCIDENT

- Report to WorkSafe if required.
- Ensure all staff involved provide principal with written record of involvement/observations.
- Complete Injury/Incident Report for school's accident/incident register.
- Provide copy of completed Injury/Incident Report to diocesan personnel.
- Ensure accurate student records are placed in student's file.
- Advise any injured staff of WorkCover entitlements.
- Complete Record of Restraint/Seclusion if relevant.
- Consider whether 'reportable conduct' and action accordingly.

POST-INCIDENT SUPPORT

- Provide post-incident support to staff.
- Provide post-incident support to student/s.
- Consider approach regarding student, e.g. restorative practices, sanctions.

REVIEW PROCESSES

- Inform health and safety representatives (if any) of incident and give opportunity for involvement in evaluating school response.
- Evaluate risk assessment and management process including conducting fresh risk assessment.
- Review and, if necessary, update general school policies including Emergency Management Plan and Behaviour Support Policy. Communicate changes to staff and parents.
- Assess the effectiveness of the student's BSP and Student Safety Plan. If the student does not have a BSP and/or a Student Safety Plan, consider whether these should be developed. Also consider access to additional information and specialist advice where necessary.
- Evaluate efficacy of emergency response equipment and systems, and upgrade as needed.
- Consider the training needs of staff.

Risk Assessment Tool

Managing Challenging Behaviours

SCHOOL:	DATE:
STUDENT:	CONDUCTED BY:

A risk assessment should be conducted whenever a risk to health or safety is identified in the school, in relation to the activities of students known to exhibit complex or challenging behaviour and for those who have a Behaviour Support Plan in place. This process helps staff to identify any potential risks, assess those risks and take steps to control the risks. In this way, the process of risk management aligns well with positive behaviour support and its emphasis on prevention strategies. In some situations, the risk assessment process may confirm the need to develop a Student Safety Plan as a means of controlling the risk. This risk assessment should be completed with reference to *CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines*, herein referred to as 'the guidelines'.

<i>If answering 'Y' to any of the questions in section 1 below, consider the italicised guidance to determine potential risk controls and outline the specific steps that will be taken.</i>			
1. INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR	Y	N	COMMENTS/CONTROLS
1.1 Is the unsafe behaviour of the student unpredictable?			<i>Organise school team to collect data. Relevant tools available from learning consultants/psychologists from regional offices.</i>
1.2 Are there identified triggers for the unsafe behaviour?			<i>Remove, modify or reduce triggers.</i>
1.3 Is it likely that the aggressive behaviour will be repeated?			<i>Develop/revise Student Safety Plan. Refer to the guidelines Section 12 'Developing a Student Safety Plan'.</i>
1.4 Does the unsafe behaviour impact PHYSICALLY on staff?			<i>Complete school Incident Form and/or CEVN Injury/Incident Report form. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
1.5 Does the unsafe behaviour impact PHYSICALLY on other students?			<i>Complete school Incident Form and/or CEVN Injury/Incident Report form. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
1.6 Does the unsafe behaviour impact PSYCHOLOGICALLY on staff?			<i>Complete school Incident Form and/or CEVN Injury/Incident Report form. Engage support services such as Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Contact regional principal consultant. Principal may debrief with staff following incident(s) with consideration of confidentiality. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
1.7 Does the unsafe behaviour impact PSYCHOLOGICALLY on other students?			<i>Complete school Incident Form and/or CEVN Injury/Incident Report form. Contact family and discuss counselling support for students. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
1.8 Does the student threaten or verbally abuse staff?			<i>Complete school Incident Form and/or CEVN Injury/Incident Report form. Engage support services such as EAP. Contact regional principal consultant. Principal may debrief with staff following incident(s) with consideration of confidentiality. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
1.9 Is there a risk of physical injury or other harm to the student concerned as a result of their behaviour?			<i>Consider the possibility of physical injury (assault, falls, abscondment) and the need for modification to the physical environment.</i>

			Support student to minimise risk through implementation of the Student Safety Plan. Refer to the guidelines Section 15 'Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools'.
1.10 Are staff and students from other classes exposed to aggressive/challenging behaviour in the yard?			Debrief with staff and students. Inform wider staffing group. Implement plan for managing occurrences, including steps for managing injuries. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.
<i>For all remaining sections, if answering 'N' to any of the questions below, consider the italicised guidance to determine potential risk controls and outline the specific steps that will be taken.</i>			
2. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	Y	N	COMMENTS
2.1 Does the school have documentation provided by a health professional to inform support for the student?			Review any recommendations if provided. Meet with the guardians and suggest they seek a consultation with an appropriate professional.
2.2 Does the school have documentation provided by a health professional outlining the student's medication/s and possible side effects?			Review any recommendations if provided. Meet with the guardians and suggest they seek a consultation with an appropriate professional.
2.3 Are there documented policies and procedures for managing unsafe behaviour of students?			Utilise CECV guidance material to develop school policies and procedures (e.g. Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines, Positive Behaviour Guidelines).
2.4 Does a Student Safety Plan exist?			Utilise CECV guidance material to develop school policies and procedures (e.g. Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines, Positive Behaviour Guidelines). Develop a Student Safety Plan.
3. WORK ENVIRONMENT	Y	N	COMMENTS
3.1 Are staff able to quickly and easily communicate when threatened?			Review staffing levels, environmental obstacles, physical location and maintenance of line of sight, communication resources.
3.2 Can a staff member quickly and easily see when assistance is required for another staff member or student if an incident occurs?			Review environmental obstacles, physical location, communication resources.
3.3 Are there enough exits and routes of escape for staff and other students, and are they accessible for all?			Review environmental obstacles, physical location, evacuation plan.
3.4 Where the student could become unsafe, have any potential objects that could cause harm to people been removed or minimised?			Review physical environment in line with Behaviour Support Plan.
3.5 Do the classrooms or student areas meet the range of the student's needs?			Ensure adequate adjustments and supports are provided in classroom and non-classroom areas.
4. SECURITY MEASURES	Y	N	COMMENTS
4.1 Are phones/intercoms/duress alarms available and in good working order?			Review communication resources. Establish plan so procedures are clear.
4.2 Are security and emergency procedures regularly tested and reviewed?			Track testing and establish maintenance schedule.
4.3 Can staff and other students retreat to a safe area when threatened?			Review environmental obstacles, physical location, safety of other students.
4.4 Is immediate assistance available if staff or students are threatened or attacked?			Review staffing levels, environmental obstacles, physical location, communication resources.

5. WORK PRACTICES	Y	N	COMMENTS
5.1 Can working alone or in isolation be avoided?			<i>Review staffing levels, environmental obstacles, physical location, communication resources, working alone policy/procedure. Consider eliminating activities associated with working alone or in isolation in instances where the risk is identified as high and controls do not sufficiently reduce it.</i>
5.2 Are staffing numbers sufficient during unsafe occurrences?			<i>Review staffing levels, environmental obstacles, physical location, communication resources.</i>
6. TRAINING AND INDUCTION	Y	N	COMMENTS
6.1 Have staff received training in how to deal with unsafe behaviour?			<i>Consider training options in consultation with relevant Catholic Education Office department, e.g. Learning Diversity.</i>
6.2 Are school staff trained to report violent incidents or threats?			<i>Implement training program for incident reporting for all staff.</i>
6.3 Are staff trained in the emergency response plan?			<i>Implement training program for responding to emergencies for all staff relevant to the situation.</i>
6.4 Are staff dealing with aggressive/challenging students experienced in managing and responding to these behaviours?			<i>Consider training options in consultation with relevant Catholic Education Office department, e.g. Learning Diversity.</i>
6.5 Do new or relieving staff receive information about aggressive/challenging students?			<i>Revise communication procedures to include information and training for managing aggressive/challenging students.</i>
7. INCIDENT RESPONSE	Y	N	COMMENTS
7.1 Are all incidents of aggression or violence reported and documented?			<i>Implement training program for incident reporting for all staff. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
7.2 Is there a formal process in place to support staff after an incident?			<i>Engage support services such as EAP. Debriefing following incident(s). Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
7.3 Is there a process in place to conduct an investigation after the incident?			<i>Record this process and implement recommendations. Utilise CECV guidance material to develop school policies and procedures (e.g. Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines, Positive Behaviour Guidelines).</i>
7.4 Is there a process in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures implemented during an incident?			<i>Review process and timeline when implementing Behaviour Support Plan. Refer to the guidelines Section 14 'Incident Management'.</i>
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:			