



Rationale

Foundational to Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) Schools and work with school 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.

Students in DOBCEL Schools present with a diversity of needs and require support in a range of ways, including behavioural support. Well-articulated school policies on behaviour expectations and management, if age-appropriate, pastorally driven and focused on ensuring a just and reasonable balance of individual and community rights, will assist in building and maintaining a positive school culture and a safe learning and work environment for students and staff.

DOBCEL is committed to fostering a positive culture and a safe and inclusive learning environment in schools. The dignity of each person is respected at all times. This implies that each person behaves in a manner characterised by mutual trust and respect so that all students are able to participate fully in an environment that enriches their spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional and social growth and outcomes.

From time to time, students, for various reasons, engage in inappropriate behaviour. The response and educative process by others in understanding this behaviour can either hinder or assist in long-term positive behaviour of the individual. It is important, therefore, to have a whole school approach to expectations, development of knowledge, skills and capabilities, support, response and management of student behaviour that is consistent with the school's vision.

Every member of the school community has a right to participate fully in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. The safety and wellbeing of others will be an important consideration in determining the reactions to and consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

The DOBCEL Behaviour Management policy and procedure is approved by the Board of DOBCEL and ratified by the Member, the Bishop of Ballarat. The documents provide the principles and key elements of DOBCEL's approach to managing its responsibilities and obligations for the care, safety and welfare of students in DOBCEL schools in supporting positive behaviours in schools. All DOBCEL Schools must implement the DOBCEL behaviour management policy and ensure that the procedures implemented at school level are consistent with the DOBCEL procedures.

Definitions

At Risk behaviour is any behaviour that has the potential to cause harm or injury to self or other. This includes physical, emotional or psychological harm.

Behaviours of concern May include behaviour that could be labelled as inappropriate, unacceptable, bullying, harassment and victimisation. It includes anything a person does or says which is likely to limit or deny access to regular school routines and activities. Such behaviours may be those a person does or says which causes stress, worry, risk, of or actual harm to others. It may be anything a person does or says of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is impacted.

Unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour can take place in different environments and mediums e.g., sporting field, school yard, bus, line, classroom online, via social media, writing, drawing, gesture.

Behaviour support: The educational support a student receives from the schools in order to learn and maintain identified behaviour.

Behaviour Support Plan (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.

Bullying

A broad concept which may generally be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying generally involves a series or pattern of events in which one individual has demonstrated unacceptable behaviour towards another individual.

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.

Criminal offences: Behaviour that may be serious enough to constitute a criminal offence. If an offence has been or may have been committed, these concerns will be reported to the police or other authorities, as appropriate.

Discriminatory conduct: Conduct whereby an individual is treated less favourably on the basis of a relevant attribute, including their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or belief or gender reassignment. Such action may constitute discriminatory conduct that is contrary to Commonwealth and Victorian anti-discrimination legislation.

Dynamic Risk Assessment means to make an on-the-spot assessment of the likely outcomes of the available options before deciding which option to choose in a situation which is stressful and evolving rapidly.

Expected Behaviour: Behaving in a manner that is suitable for a public gathering, respecting the other members of the forum (class, meeting, assembly, gathering) and treating others as you would wish to be treated. In general, appropriate behaviour is any behaviour that contributes to the positive learning environment and aligns with school rules and behavioural expectations.

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. It does not refer to therapeutic devices, prescribed by appropriate professionals and those approved for purposes such as vehicle safety restraints.

Pastoral Care is defined as the actions of a personal, social, physical, emotional, mental or spiritual nature taken within the educational community by its leaders and community members to promote and enhance the wellbeing of the individual. Key elements of wellbeing are positive self-regard, respect for others, positive relationships, responsible behaviour and personal resilience.

Program Support Group (PSG) comprises the people with the best knowledge of and responsibility for a student, including parents/guardians, an advocate for the parents (optional), the student's teacher(s) or nominated staff member, senior staff and invited consultants who work together to establish goals, plan for adjustments to programs plan for ongoing education and monitor learning progress. Decision and formal communication will generally occur in PSG meetings. A PSG may also be referred to as a Student Support Group (SSG).

Reasonable action means to take action that is proportionate and necessary. What is considered reasonable may depend on individual circumstance and is a matter of professional judgement.

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 instances, the student remains free to move away.

Restrictive intervention is any intervention which restricts a person's freedom of movement.

Safe place, chill out or time out rooms (safe place) Having students go to a safe place does not amount to seclusion. The purpose of such rooms or areas is to support students who require a break from stressful or demanding situations, 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 students 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 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.

School-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS) is a framework that brings school communities together to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures. SWPBS assists schools to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people. SWPBS can be implemented in any school setting to support students from Foundation through to Year 12. The framework supports schools to identify and implement successful evidence-based whole-school practices to enhance learning outcomes for children and young people.

Seclusion is the solitary confinement of a student in a room or area from which their exit is prevented by a barrier or another person. Seclusion involves 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 be physically able to (e.g. The door is not locked). Seclusion **does not** include safe places, time out or chill out rooms, these being conditions set up to support students.

Student

A person enrolled at a DOBCEL School.

Student behaviour support plan is a working document designed to clearly outline the adjustments that will be implemented to maximise a student's engagement, thereby increasing learning outcomes. It is developed in consultation with those who know the student well, including medical or allied health professionals.

Student Safety Plan (SSP) 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.

Time out. A procedure in which the person is separated temporarily from a rewarding environment as part of a planned and therapeutic program to modify behaviour.

Vulnerable students

The DOBCEL Board requires that the Principal of each DOBCEL School considers the special provisions that may apply where vulnerable students and families are concerned, in determining whether to instigate processes associated with suspension, negotiated transfer or expulsion.

Such students include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disabilities, students in out of home care, students from culturally or linguistically diverse communities and those with mental health issues.

Negotiated Transfer involves a change of school by a student either between Catholic Schools, or to a school within another sector, or to an alternative educational setting. In the case of students who are of post compulsory school age, a wider range of options might be considered, for example a negotiated transfer, either temporary or permanent, to the workforce or to a higher education or training institute.

Wellbeing is defined as a state in which every person realises their own potential, can manage the normal stresses of life and work productively to contribute to their community.

Principles of Governance

Gospel values and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching are reflected in DOBCEL's behaviour management processes. These values influence both DOBCEL actions and response to promoting school environments where the rights of all are respected.

Gospel values and Catholic social teaching are reflected in DOBCEL policies on student wellbeing and influence a school's response to promoting positive pastoral and restorative principles and practices:

Human dignity

Our common humanity requires respect for and support of the sanctity and worth of every human life. All other rights and responsibilities flow from the concept of human dignity. This principle is deemed as the central aspect of the Church's social teaching. The belief that each life has value is shared with International Human Rights which are universal, inviolable and inalienable.¹

Common Good - Each social group, therefore, must take account the rights and aspirations of other groups, and of the well-being of the whole human family. The common good is reached when all work together to improve the wellbeing of society and the wider world. The rights of the individual to personal possessions and community resources must be balanced with the needs of the disadvantaged and dispossessed.¹

¹ *ibid.*

Guiding Principles - Behaviour Management

The Guiding Principles for effective student behaviour include:

- Education on standards of behaviour expected for students attending the school, healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality), resilience and child abuse awareness and prevention as required under *Education and Training Reform Act 2006(Vic)* and [Ministerial Order 870, Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools](#) .
- Zero tolerance of child abuse and prohibition of corporal punishment in all Ballarat Catholic Schools.
- When behaviour does not meet expectations, and an administrative response is deemed necessary, the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will apply.
- The recognition that all members of the school community are worthy and have a right to work and learn in a safe, positive environment.
- The best interests of the child are the primary consideration.
- All students have a right to be supported to learn positive behaviours, self-manage and self-regulate their behaviours.
- Positive behaviour is best learnt and supported in a whole of school approach that incorporates a multi-tiered continuum of support.
- It is expected that behaviour expectations meet and reflect the needs of each Ballarat Catholic School community and promote the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others. All members of the school and wider community share the responsibility of supporting positive student behaviour by developing and promoting high-quality relationships.
- The community shares the responsibility of fostering life - affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity and safety of each person.

Policy Statement

DOBCEL Schools are required to implement this policy and develop procedures consistent with this Policy and Procedures document to promote consistent and fair approaches towards managing student behaviour including:

- ensuring that corporal punishment is explicitly prohibited;
- student behaviour procedures that include an explanation of the school's approach to procedural fairness and how it affords procedural fairness to students;
- promoting and supporting positive student behaviour, all students will be provided with the education support needed to learn positive behaviours, value diversity, self-manage and self-regulation their behaviours;
- the best interests of the child is a primary consideration in all student behaviour management response;
- when behaviour does not meet expectations, and a school response is deemed necessary, the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will apply;
- data will be collected and used to screen, monitor and assess student progress;
- outlining roles and responsibilities for developing, implementing, reviewing and reporting on matters relating to student behaviour and behaviour management.

Responsibilities

The DOBCEL Board will monitor all DOBCEL Schools to ensure they meet the Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration developed by the VRQA as they relate to student behaviour.

The DOBCEL Board will develop policies for Student Behaviour Management and the Executive Director will monitor the implementation of these policies in DOBCEL schools. Policies will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if required. Changes in Student Behaviour Management policies will be communicated to Principals as soon as possible.

The Executive Director will report to the DOBCEL Board on the implementation and compliance across all schools in a regular schedule.

The Executive Director will provide resources to schools to support the development and implementation of school policy and procedures. Principals will receive training to ensure that schools comply with the policy.

Principals develop strategies to ensure appropriate behaviour expectations are understood within their school community. They are required to document the whole school approach to behaviour management in their school.

All DOBCEL schools must adopt a whole-school approach to behaviour management based on developing student knowledge, skills and capabilities in understanding and demonstrating positive behaviour. Schools must also provide clear expectations, processes and consequences that will be implemented if there is inappropriate behaviour. Each school must develop procedures to ensure the requirements of this policy are fulfilled within the school's context. (See Appendix 1).

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) Framework

All DOBCEL schools will use the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) Framework. SWPBS focuses on strategies and methods that aim to assist students to reduce challenging behaviours and increase success through the learning of new skills. Proactive strategies are aimed at decreasing behaviours of concern and replacing them with pro-social skills that lead to enhancement of positive social interaction.

When SWPBS is implemented well, teachers and students have more time to focus on relationships and classroom instruction. Students and staff benefit from:

- increased respectful and positive behaviour;
- increased time focused on instruction;
- improved social-emotional wellbeing;
- positive and respectful relationships among students and staff;
- increased adoption of evidence-based instructional practices and
- a predictable learning environment with improved perceptions of safety and increased attendance.

Effective whole-of school approaches to behaviour management require age-appropriate education and skilling of students through processes focused on individual and community wellbeing, and on ensuring a just and reasonable balance of individual and community rights, needs and responsibilities. The school-wide approach will be consistent with current DOBCEL guidelines for behaviour support.

Three tiers of prevention

A tiered approach is used in DOBCEL schools to promote positive behaviour, prevention, early intervention and targeted support for all students.

Tier 1: Universal Prevention (All)

School wide interventions supporting all students. Tier 1 supports, provide the foundation for learning and behaviour for all students. For most students, this level of support provides what they need to be successful and to prevent future behaviours of concern.

Tier 2: Targeted prevention (Some)

Secondary, high efficiency, rapid response, targeted interventions, supporting groups of students at risk. School supports designed to provide additional practice and feedback opportunities for groups of students with specific skill deficits. The skills developed support students to be successful participation in social and academic programs of the school.

Tier 3: Intensive, Individualise Prevention (Few)

Tertiary supports are the most intensive support the school offers, they are assessment based, intensive, durable procedures supporting individual students. This level of support will often require plans and goals related to academic and behaviour support.

Related Documents and/or Legislation

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- DOBCEL Attendance Policy
- DOBCEL Complaints Management Policy and Procedure
- DOBCEL Duty of Care Policy Suite
- DOBCEL Enrolment Policy
- DOBCEL: Suspensions and Expulsion Policy and Procedures
- DOBCEL Learning and Teaching Policy
- DOBCEL Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy
- DOBCEL Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- CECV Child Safety Commitment Statement
- Code of Conduct for Caring for Children - Professional Standards Catholic Diocese of Ballarat
- CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines. https://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/getmedia/bc1d235d-9a98-4bb4-b3ac-84b50fa7c639/CECV-Positive-Behaviour-Guidelines_FINAL2.aspx?ext=.pdf
- Privacy and Data Protection Act (Vic) 2014_ http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/num_act/padpa201460o2014317/

Appendices

Appendix 1. Student Behaviour School Policy (Template)

Appendix 2. Student Behaviour School Expectations and Procedures (Template)

Appendix 3. Restrictive Intervention Guidelines for Schools

Appendix 4. Post Incident Checklist for Principals.

Appendix 5. Record of Restraint / Seclusion Form.

Procedures for Schools

Foundational to DOBCEL Schools and work within school 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.

Students in DOBCEL Schools today, present with a diversity of needs and require support in a range of ways, including behavioural support. Well-articulated school policy and procedures on behaviour expectations and management, if age-appropriate, pastorally driven and focused on ensuring a just and reasonable balance of individual and community rights, will assist in building and maintaining a positive school culture and a safe learning and work environment for students and staff.

These Guidelines for School procedures should be read in conjunction with the DOBCEL Behaviour Management Policy and provide guidance to school communities on the development of processes and strategies to be used to support student behaviour.

To implement the Student Behaviour Management Policy, DOBCEL Schools will develop school level a policy and procedure that includes the following areas:

- School Policy (See Appendix 1)
- Positive Behaviour Education and Support
- School wide Expectations
- Curriculum and programs to explicitly teach personal and social skills
- Documentation and Data Analysis
- Develop school and classroom routines that align with school wide expectations
- Interventions for Unacceptable Behaviour
- Professional learning
- Communication with the school community and external agencies

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) Framework

SWPBS is a process that establishes systems and practice for teaching social and behavioural skills which in turn enhance learning and teaching. Schools have a responsibility to provide education in safe and predictable environments. Establishing a positive, proactive, preventative school wide set of behavioural expectations is a necessary first step enabling schools to achieve their goals and responsibilities.

SWPBS is an organisational framework, not a specific "program", "model", "approach", "tool", or "specific curriculum", rather a compilation of research validated effective practices, interventions, and systems.

SWPBS provides a framework for:

- improving the social behavioural climate of schools;
- supporting the impact of academic instruction on achievement;
- increasing proactive, positive, preventive management while decreasing reactive management;

- integrating academic and behaviour supports;
- improving services for all students, including students at risk and students with identified disabilities or diverse learning needs.

Tiered Model of Prevention

DOBCEL schools will consider the behavioural and learning needs of each student through a tiered model of prevention. The tiers, provide guidance on the level of support and intervention required, ranging from preventing the development of inappropriate behaviour (primary) to reducing the impact or intensity (secondary or tertiary) of problem behaviour occurrences.

Three tiers of prevention

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Positive Behaviour Education and Support

DOBCEL schools will:

- Adopt the school-wide approach to behaviour management, consistent with the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework;
- Outline how collaboration with the school community is undertaken to implement a positive behaviour management approach based on restorative justice and processes
- Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment and make the best interest of the child a primary consideration in its approach to student behaviour management
- Demonstrate that restorative justice, positive behaviour, social and emotional learning methods are adopted when dealing with specific behavioural issues, identifying and responding to suspected abuse and learning and teaching within an inclusive classroom
- Ensure teacher supervision is effective in all school environments
- Details steps for managing suspensions and expulsions
- Use the least restrictive intervention to prevent or de-escalate student conduct or emotional states that risk harm to self or others and outline circumstances when it may be necessary to use restrictive interventions

Develop Schoolwide Expectations

DOBCEL schools will:

- Develop school-based policy and procedures that fulfil the requirements of DOBCEL policy
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in implementing whole school plan to support positive behaviour, including suspensions and expulsions
- Demonstrate that the school's approach to student behaviour management, takes into consideration personalised adjustments based on student needs, and that are culturally, developmentally and psychologically appropriate
- Include the school's response to (as applicable in your context):
 - all forms of bullying
 - aggression
 - drug and alcohol misuse
 - risks of suicidal behaviour
 - poor student attendance and truancy
- Include rules regarding personal use of mobile and other electronic devices and responses to breaches of these rules
- Include the school's strategy for communicating with parents on Students' behaviours and how the school communicates these policies and procedures to the school community
- Outline the school's strategy for deciding on disciplinary measures, which considers the best interest of the child and safety and wellbeing of all school staff and all other members of the school community
- Address the school's approach to Student Behaviour Support where the need is identified (i.e. seeking advice from experts, consulting parents to inform personalised student behaviour support plans etc)
- Provide whole school processes and levels of intervention to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support

Curriculum and programs to explicitly teach personal and social skills

DOBCEL schools will:

- Demonstrate that curriculum includes the teaching of social and emotional skills and positive behaviour skills and key messages of positive behaviour such as feedback and acknowledgment are reinforced in all directions for all students
- Ensure there is a student support team (SST) to assist teachers, students and parents in behaviour management and in developing Individual Behaviour Management Plans (IBMP)
- Promote student voice and participation to provide students with a sense of ownership and empowerment
- Establish social / emotional and educational behavioural support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress

Documentation and Data Analysis

DOBCEL schools will:

- Outline processes for documenting student data on wellbeing and behaviour records through incident reports
- Record major incidents in the yard or during class using the Student Behaviour Management Register available on SIMON, (Learning Management System) and teachers will keep anecdotal records for minor incidents depending on frequency and context;
- Ensure teachers will communicate behaviour incidents to parents as outlined in a school's approach;
- Establish procedures to monitor behaviour incidents/register and analyse student data.
- Establish procedures for monitoring student attendance
- Maintain a register of suspensions and expulsions
- Ensure major and serious incidents are reported to the DOBCEL Executive Director

Develop school and classroom routines that align with school wide expectations

It is expected that teachers will:

- Set clear expectations about expected student behaviour at all time
- Address behaviour that is inappropriate;
- Reinforce positive behaviour;
- Give clear instructions;
- Redirect learners when off-task;
- Follow through on consequences;
- Discuss with the Principal any concerns or strategies to improve behaviour management;
- Ensure that teaching and learning is engaging and considers the diverse needs of students;
- Communicate with parents as required about student behaviour and engagement;
- Discuss with students how to respond appropriately when other students display problem behaviour, or when they are re-directed or receive a consequence for problem behaviour.

When responding to unacceptable behaviour, teachers will:

- **Redirect low level behaviour** – students will be reminded of the expected school behaviour, and asked to think about how they might be able to act more safely, more responsibly or more respectfully. This will encourage self-reflection and ownership of behaviour.
- **Provide targeted behaviour support** – students who are identified as requiring more targeted support to assist them in meeting the expected behaviour, will take part in the school's particular strategy. These students will receive increased daily opportunities to receive positive contact with adults. They may also receive mentoring or intensive social skills support as required.
- **Provide intensive behaviour support** – students requiring more intensive support are referred to school support personnel as outlined in the school's strategies. The role of the support team is to facilitate a Functional Behaviour Assessment, work together with the child and parents to develop appropriate behaviour supports, monitor the impact of these and, adjust as required. Support from the DOBCEL Management and/or professionals from other agencies may be included in this process when it is appropriate to do so.

Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour

Schools must make systematic efforts to prevent problem student behaviour by teaching, modelling and reinforcing expected behaviour on an ongoing consistent basis. When unacceptable behaviour occurs, students must experience predictable consequences.

The school seeks to ensure that responses to unacceptable behaviour are consistent and proportionate to the nature of the behaviour and the age of the student.

All students and staff achieve this through school/class meetings where unacceptable behaviour is named and the expected consequence is decided and agreed upon. This will be consistent with the whole-school approach to processes and strategies for student behaviour.

Restorative justice procedures should be used to facilitate the conversation regarding behaviour.

Interventions for Unacceptable Behaviour

Removal from classroom

In the case of a student being removed from the classroom, the student must be always supervised and provided with suitable learning activities. If a student requires consistent removal from class, it must be reported to the Principal or Student Wellbeing Leader, or other designated leader and a behaviour management plan is to be implemented.

Restrictive Intervention

If it is necessary to use restrictive interventions to protect the safety of a student and members of the school community, the least restrictive intervention, that is not more restrictive or intrusive than necessary to prevent the person from inflicting harm on themselves or others and is applied, no longer than necessary to prevent harm or danger must be adopted.

Restrictive interventions are used only in emergency situations, when there are no other options for maintaining the safety of others. They must not be used as part of a student management plan. (Appendix 2)

Student sexual offending

The joint protocol, *PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools* identifies the approach to responding to and reporting child protection concerns in DOBCEL Schools through the *Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*.

A staff member must act and follow the *Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*, as soon as they become aware of a child protection incident, that is, when **a child is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse**.

The joint protocol, *PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending* identifies the approach to responding to and reporting child protection concerns in DOBCEL Schools through the *Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending*.

Victorian Law holds that students under 10 years of age cannot commit a sexual offence. Guidance on responding to problem sexual behaviour in students under 10 and other forms of student sexualised behaviour which does not constitute student sexual offending can be found in Appendix 1 of *PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending*.

A staff member must act and follow the Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending, as soon as they witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a suspicion that a student is a victim of a student sexual offending and/or a student has engaged in sexual offending.

Where a staff member believes that a child is subject to any other form of child abuse (sexual abuse by an adult), they must follow the procedures outlined in *PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools*.

For behaviour that may indicate student sexual offending or sexualised behaviour refer to the following documents:

DOBCEL PROTECT: Reporting and Responding Obligations Policy

DOBCEL PROTECT: Identifying and responding to Student Sexual Offending

YOUR OWN SCHOOL PROTECT: Reporting and Responding Obligations Procedure Schools

Professional Learning

DOBCEL schools will ensure that all staff (including all new staff, replacement and emergency teachers) have access to professional learning that includes:

- understanding the school's approach and strategies to implementing the DOBCEL Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures;
- SWPBS, restorative justice practices, positive behaviour, social and emotional learning, dealing with specific behavioural issues, identifying and responding to suspected abuse and learning and teaching within an inclusive classroom.
- understanding and assisting families and students from culturally and linguistically backgrounds.
- understanding and responding to all legislative requirements.

Communication with the school community and external agencies

DOBCEL schools will:

- Ensure the steps for managing suspensions and expulsions of students are clearly outlined, reflect procedural fairness, and are communicated to parents and guardians.
- Ensure the DOBCEL Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures is available on the school website, and is referred to in the Staff and Parent handbook
- Ensure all members of the school community are aware of the school's expectations and guidelines about student behaviour
- Communicate with external agencies and the DOBCEL Management for additional assistance or expertise in dealing with specific behaviour-management issues when required
- Address the school's approach to coordinating with external agencies and agreed behaviour interventions or therapies provided by external practitioners or agencies

DOBCEL Student Behaviour School Policy (Template)

Insert School Logo and School Name

This Policy has been approved by the DOBCEL Board for application in each DOBCEL school and must be customised for use in each particular School in accordance with the instructions outlined in this Framework. This policy must be uploaded to the School Website

Purpose

The *[insert school name here]* Student Behaviour Policy reflects the school community's shared expectations in relation to student engagement, attendance, and behaviour. This Policy sets out the clear processes to be followed to support students' behavioural, educational and emotional engagement.

This Policy provides an overview of how *[insert school name here]* will:

- promote positive behaviour in the school community;
- seek to prevent behavioural issues; and
- respond to challenging student behaviour occurring at school, at a school activity away from the school grounds or while travelling to or from school or a school activity.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with all School policies, including Attendance Monitoring Policy and the [CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines](#)

School Profile

[Drafting note for schools: It is recommended that each school include a school profile statement at the beginning of the Student Behaviour Policy which details the diversity of the student population and school community. This can include, for example, the school's history and a summary of relevant school data as well as the community aspirations for the school].

[insert school name here] is committed to providing equitable access and opportunity for all. The school considers that awareness of, recognition of, and responsiveness to the needs and rights of all individuals are essential to human dignity. Inclusive practices embrace and celebrate diversity, invite belonging and provide opportunities for participation and achievement of appropriate learning outcomes.

Foundational to our work with students, families and the school community 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. All teachers, students, families, parishes, and the wider community contribute to fostering life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity of each person.

[Drafting note for schools: You may wish to also include a global statement that all schools are to include in the Student Behaviour Policy a statement which affirms the uniform commitments of a Catholic school education, as applicable to all Catholic schools. The above statements from the CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines provide an example].

Rationale

[Drafting note for schools: The Student Behaviour Policy should be tailored to the unique characteristics of your school and the school community. This includes your school's statement of principles, its values and mission. We recommend that you adopt the suggested headings below and amend the content accordingly].

At *[insert school name here]* we strive to provide an inclusive education which values diversity and celebrates difference. Diversity is enacted through a pedagogy of inclusion and a commitment to uphold the rights of all to be welcomed, valued, acknowledged and actively engaged in education. Our learning community is committed to processes that support all students to make optimal progress and respect the rights of all students to learn in a positive and supportive environment. We seek to provide successful participation and to intervene as early as possible when students are not actively engaged in learning. Student behaviour is linked to the quality of the learning experiences. Purposeful, authentic, and relevant learning experiences that are of a sufficiently challenging yet achievable standard maximise positive behaviour.

Vision

[Drafting note for schools: please adapt for your school based on the DOBCEL Vision Statement and the vision and mission statement in your own school].

Mission

[Drafting note for schools: please adapt for your school based on DOBCEL's Mission Statement and the vision and mission statement in your own school].

[insert school name here] is committed to providing educational opportunities that actively welcome, engage, inspire and challenge all students to learn in a safe and enlivening Catholic environment.

Philosophy

[Drafting note for schools: please adapt for your school if relevant]

Aims

[Drafting note for schools: please adapt for your school based on DOBCEL Policy Aims, what follows is an example of what you may include].

Our school is a community that exemplifies the gospel values of love, forgiveness, justice, and truth. Our school community recognises that everyone has the right to be respected, to feel safe and be safe and, in turn, our school community acknowledges each member's own obligation to behave responsibly. This Policy is intended to guide our school's actions. It has been developed in consultation with the school community and seeks to prioritise respectful relationships and safety in response to the rights and needs of all members of the school community. A safe and supportive environment respects the rights of all students to learn, the rights of all teachers to teach and the rights of all members of the school community to be safe. Every person at the school has a right to feel safe, to be happy and to learn. Therefore, our school aims:

- to promote the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others;
- to acknowledge the worth of all members of the community and their right to work and learn in a positive environment;
- to maintain good order and harmony;
- to affirm cooperation as well as responsible independence in learning; and
- to foster self-discipline and to develop responsibility for one's own behaviour.

Principles

[Drafting note for schools: please adapt for your school, the following is provided as an example].

[insert school name here] strives to build a safe and positive school environment that 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 and share in the responsibility to foster life-affirming relationships that recognise and support the inherent dignity and safety of each person. Members of the school community are expected to contribute to the mission and vision of the school and to understand their rights and acknowledge their obligation to behave responsibly.

As a provider of Catholic education, the school Principal will consider the need for the school community to represent and conform with the doctrines, beliefs and principles of the Catholic faith when making decisions regarding matters of school administration, including enrolment. Pupils and families who are members of other faiths are warmly welcomed at our school. However, the school reserves its right to exercise its administrative discretion in appropriate circumstances, where it is necessary to do so to avoid injury to the religious sensitivities of the Catholic school community.

It is vitally important that the school is made aware of each child's individual circumstances insofar as these may impact upon his or her physical, functional, emotional, or educational needs, particularly where the school is required to provide additional support to the child.

Definitions

[Drafting note for schools: please adapt for your school, the following is provided as an example].

At Risk behaviour is any behaviour that has the potential to cause harm or injury to self or other. This includes physical, emotional, or psychological harm.

Behaviours of concern May include behaviour that could be labelled as inappropriate, unacceptable, bullying, harassment, and victimisation. It includes anything a person does or says which is likely to limit or deny access to regular school routines and activities. Such behaviours may be those a person does or says which causes stress, worry, risk, of or actual harm to others. It may be anything a person does or says of such intensity, frequency, or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is impacted.

Unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour can take place in different environments and mediums e.g., sporting field, school yard, bus, line, classroom online, via social media, writing, drawing, gesture.

Behaviour support: The educational support a student receives from the schools to learn and maintain identified behaviour.

Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is a working document designed to clearly outline the adjustments that will be implemented to maximise the student's engagement, thereby increasing learning outcomes.

Bullying

A broad concept which may generally be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying generally involves a series or pattern of events in which one individual has demonstrated unacceptable behaviour towards another individual.

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.

Criminal offences: Behaviour that may be serious enough to constitute a criminal offence. If an offence has been or may have been committed, these concerns will be reported to the police or other authorities, as appropriate.

Discriminatory conduct: Conduct whereby an individual is treated less favourably on the basis of a relevant attribute, including their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or belief or gender reassignment. Such action may constitute discriminatory conduct that is contrary to Commonwealth and Victorian anti-discrimination legislation.

Dynamic Risk Assessment means to make an on-the-spot assessment of the likely outcomes of the available options before deciding which option to choose in a situation which is stressful and evolving rapidly.

Expected Behaviour: Behaving in a manner that is suitable for a public gathering, respecting the other members of the forum (class, meeting, assembly, gathering) and treating others as you would wish to be treated. In general, appropriate behaviour is any behaviour that contributes to the positive learning environment and aligns with school rules and behavioural expectations.

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. It does not refer to therapeutic devices, prescribed by appropriate professionals and those approved for purposes such as vehicle safety restraints.

Pastoral Care is defined as the actions of a personal, social, physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual nature taken within the educational community by its leaders and community members to promote and enhance the wellbeing of the individual. Key elements of wellbeing are positive self-regard, respect for others, positive relationships, responsible behaviour, and personal resilience.

Program Support Group (PSG) comprises the people with the best knowledge of and responsibility for a student, including parents/guardians, an advocate for the parents (optional), the student's teacher(s) or nominated staff member, senior staff and invited consultants who work together to establish goals, plan for adjustments to programs plan for ongoing education and monitor learning progress. Decision and formal communication will generally occur in PSG meetings. A PSG may also be referred to as a Student Support Group (SSG).

Reasonable action means to take action that is proportionate and necessary. What is considered reasonable may depend on individual circumstance and is a matter of professional judgement.

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 instances, the student remains free to move away.

Restrictive intervention is any intervention which restricts a person's freedom of movement.

Safe place, chill out or time out rooms (safe place) Having students go to a safe place does not amount to seclusion. The purpose of such rooms or areas is to support students who require a break from stressful or demanding situations, 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 students 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 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.

School-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS) is a framework that brings school communities together to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures. SWPBS assists schools to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people. SWPBS can be implemented in any school setting to support students from Foundation through to Year 12. The framework supports schools to identify and implement successful evidence-based whole-school practices to enhance learning outcomes for children and young people.

Seclusion is the solitary confinement of a student in a room or area from which their exit is prevented by a barrier or another person. Seclusion involves 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 be physically able to (e.g. The door is not locked). Seclusion **does not** include safe places, time out or chill out rooms, these being conditions set up to support students.

Student

A person enrolled at a DOBCEL School.

Student behaviour support plan is a working document designed to clearly outline the adjustments that will be implemented in order to maximise a student's engagement, thereby increasing learning outcomes. It is developed in consultation with those who know the student well, including medical or allied health professionals.

Student Safety Plan (SSP) 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.

Time out. A procedure in which the person is separated temporarily from a rewarding environment as part of a planned and therapeutic program to modify behaviour.

Legislative Context

The *Education Training and Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.) (sch 4 cl 12) outlines the School's obligations to ensure that the care, safety and welfare of all students attending the School. In discharging duty of care responsibilities, the School and teaching staff must exercise professional judgment to achieve a balance between ensuring that students do not face an unreasonable risk of harm and encouraging students' independence and maximising learning opportunities. Non-teaching staff, volunteers and external providers must exercise judgment appropriate in the circumstances. The school must also comply with legislation related to Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) for staff.

This document is informed by relevant Australian and Victorian legislation including:

- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic.)

Related Documents and/or Legislation

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- DOBCEL Attendance Policy
- DOBCEL Complaints Management Policy and Procedure
- DOBCEL Duty of Care Policy Suite
- DOBCEL Enrolment Policy
- DOBCEL: Suspensions and Expulsions Policy and Procedures
- DOBCEL Learning and Teaching Policy
- DOBCEL Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy
- DOBCEL Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy and Procedures
- CECV Child Safety Commitment Statement
- Code of Conduct for Caring for Children - Professional Standards Catholic Diocese of Ballarat
- CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines. https://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/getmedia/bc1d235d-9a98-4bb4-b3ac-84b50fa7c639/CECV-Positive-Behaviour-Guidelines_FINAL2.aspx?ext=.pdf
- Privacy and Data Protection Act (Vic) 2014_ http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/num_act/padpa201460o2014317/

DOBCEL Student Behaviour Expectations and Procedures (Template)

Insert School Logo and School Name

[Drafting note for schools: the shared expectations of students, parents and the School should be tailored to your school. Generally speaking, shared expectations should be jointly negotiated and implemented by all member of the school community, be clear and specific, focus on positive and pro-social behaviours, focused on prevention and early intervention and be consistently, fairly and reasonably applied]. This Code of Conduct or Expectations Must be uploaded to the School Website)

[insert school name here] recognises the importance of providing clear guidance and expectations which are all applicable to all members of the school community.

The table below sets out *[insert school name here]* expectations for its students, parents and staff.

	Students are expected to:	Parents/Carers are expected to:	Principals/Teachers & Staff will:
1.	take responsibility for their learning and have high expectations in themselves that they can learn	have high expectations of their child's behaviour and have an understanding of the School's behavioural expectations	promote positive reinforcement and enhance student self-esteem by having a planned approach for recognising and responding to appropriate behaviour
2.	model the School's core values of respect, endeavor, communication, trust and teamwork	communicate with the School in regards to their child's circumstances	deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the well-being of every child focusing on pro-social behaviours
3.	take responsibility for their own behaviour and the impact of their behaviour on others	cooperate with the School by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs	employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues
4.	comply with this Policy and work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes to: a. obey all reasonable requests of staff;	provide complete, accurate and up to date information when completing an enrolment form and supply the School, prior to enrolment, with any additional information as maybe requested, including	intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues
	b. respect the rights of others to be safe and learn; and respect the property of others.	copies of documents such as medical/specialist reports (where relevant to the child's schooling), reports from previous schools, court orders or parenting agreements	
5.	c.	comply with the school's behaviour aims and the school's Code of Conduct and to support the school in upholding prescribed standards of dress, appearance and behaviour, in accordance with the terms of your child's enrolment at the School	consistently apply this Policy through a shared collegiate understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances

6.	d.	acknowledge and understand that unacceptable behaviour by a child, or repeated behaviour by a parent or guardian that, in the school's view, is unacceptable and damaging to the partnership between parent/guardian and school, may result in suspension or termination of the child's enrolment	plan for the professional development needs of all staff to enable them to develop and maintain positive relationships with their students
7.	e.		recognise that for some students additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and staff are committed to working with families to reintegrate students in an educational setting after exclusion

Shared Attendance Expectations

[Drafting note for schools: the shared expectations of students, parents and the school should be tailored to your school. Shared expectations should be jointly negotiated and implemented by all members of the school community, be clear and specific, focus on positive and pro-social behaviours, focused on prevention and early intervention, and be consistently, fairly and reasonably applied]. The following shared attendance expectations adopts the shared expectations set out in the DET's 'Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'. Schools should also include expectations for other aspects of DOBCEL policy guidelines such as mobile phone usage, bullying prevention]

Ensuring that students attend school each day is a shared expectation of all students, parents, and the wider school community. See DOBCEL Attendance [Monitoring Policy](#).

The table below sets out *[insert school name here]* shared attendance expectations for its students, parents and staff.

	Students are expected to:	Parents/Carers are expected to:	Principals/Teachers & Staff will:
1.	attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day that the school is open to students	ensure that their child's enrolment details are correct	proactively promote regular attendance
2.	be prepared to participate fully in lessons	ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually	mark rolls accurately each learning session

3.	bring a note from their parents/carers explaining an absence/lateness if not advised by parents through the established school processes	advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent	follow up on any unexplained absences promptly and consistently
4.	remain on the school premises during school time unless they have permission to leave from the School and parents	account for all student absences	identify trends via data analysis
5.	work with their teachers to develop learning activities to be included in any Student Absence Learning Plan and to be completed during a prolonged absence from school	keep family holidays within scheduled school holidays	report attendance data in the student report and school's Annual Report
6.	work cooperatively with the School to develop personal attendance improvement goals and strategies when their attendance has been inconsistent	support their child's learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students or arrange distance education after prolonged absences	support students whose attendance is problematic by developing 'Return to School' plans and working with families to implement individualised strategies
7.		work cooperatively and collaboratively with the School to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance has been inconsistent due to reasons deemed unsatisfactory by the school	report lengthy or unexplained absences to the Educational Consultant
8.			work collaboratively with parents and students to develop an agreed Student Absence Learning Plan when a student will be absent from school for an extended period of time
9.			convene a Program Support Group meeting which is attendance focused with parents and students when a student's attendance pattern is of concern to the school

10.			provide ongoing intensive support for students if communication with parents hasnot been possible or if the student's attendance pattern continues to be irregular after the initial Program Support Group meeting
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School Action and Consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school practices, as well as targeted and individualised support when required. Effective student behaviour change and student behaviour support is enhanced through internally based school support structures, and externally based family, education, community, and interagency partnerships. The school will apply a range of supports and measures to address inappropriate student behaviour. Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, the school will institute a staged response, in accordance with DOBCEL policies and the CECV Positive Support Guidelines, 2018.

Where applicable, an incident report must be completed and provided to the Principal or relevant staff member.

School Procedures for Positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour

[Drafting note for schools: Schools to consider the strategies it applies to reinforce appropriate behaviour, including verbal recognition, individual or class rewards, communication with parents/wider school community, as appropriate. Please provide details of these strategies below, prior to consideration of preventative or early intervention strategies.]These procedures must be available to parents and uploaded on to school websites)

Tier 1: School-wide supports

[insert school name here] implements school-wide preventative and early intervention strategies and practices for all its students to support positive behaviours, including:

- Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- Providing physical environments that are conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- Ensuring student participation in the development and implementation of whole school expectations
- Empowering students by creating opportunities to take responsibility and be involved in decision making
- Monitoring attendance and academic progress of students with the view to recognising students at risk
- Developing Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) in consultation with the Program SupportGroup (PSG) where appropriate for individual students

Tier 2: Targeted supports

In addition to Tier 1 supports, some students may require targeted interventions to meet behavioural standards, including irregular attendance. These students will be supported through a staged response, including:

- Understanding the student's background and needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student's learning program
- Documentation of incidents relating to the management of student behaviours to inform decision making.
- Revision of the Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)
- Parent consultation via phone or interview
- Support strategies that might assist the student to self-calm such a quiet space or designated alternative area that they can go to if they are feeling overwhelmed
- Case conference

Tier 3: Intensive intervention

[Drafting note for schools: Schools to consider the strategies it applies to reinforce appropriate behaviour, including verbal recognition, individual or class rewards, communication with parents/wider school community, as appropriate. Please provide details of these strategies below, prior to consideration of preventative or early intervention strategies.]

Reducing unwanted behaviour and consequences for inappropriate student behaviour

[insert school name here] adopts a staged response to inappropriate behaviour and appropriate responses may take the form of:

- Non-verbal warning – e.g., eye contact / hand movement / shake of head
- Verbal warning which identifies the misbehaviour followed by a 'do over' prompt providing student the opportunity to use expected behaviours
- Changing student access to learning activity e.g., work on own, change groups, change location
- Removing student access to learning activity e.g., take a break at your desk
- Moving student from the room e.g., finish your work next door
- Student required to stay back at end of class
- Student required to complete work during recess / lunchtime

When concerns arise about a student's on-going behaviour or when a student is displaying consistent behaviour of concern, *[insert school name here]* will implement a targeted response to identify and address the behaviour and teach replacement behaviour. This may involve the following support strategies:

- Convening a Program Support Group (PSG) meeting involving parents/carers/Learning Diversity/Pastoral Wellbeing coordinator and the student where appropriate.
- Developing/Revising a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) or attendance plan

- Development of a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and/or Safety Plan where appropriate for individual students
- Referral to external Health or Allied Health providers
- Contact with CEB staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to behaviours of concern in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

Measures should always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour and are best used with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour. Disciplinary measures will be implemented in accordance with the CECV Positive Support Guidelines and may include:

- Restorative practice
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
- Detention
- Withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class. In situations where the student is not able to comply with the instruction to relocate, the class (all other students) will be relocated/evacuated. The student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities to provide an opportunity to de-escalate or for a specified period of time. Parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Negotiated transfer
- Expulsion

A student may be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success, or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour which may put the health, safety and wellbeing of other students, staff or themselves at significant risk.

If other strategies are unsuccessful in modifying student behaviour, *[insert school name here]* will follow the DOBCEL Guidelines for Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and/or Expulsion.

Corporal punishment

[Drafting note for schools: It is a requirement in the Minimum Standards that all student engagement policies must contain an express statement that the use of corporal punishment is prohibited.]

The use of corporal punishment is expressly prohibited at the school and under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*.

Consultation

As every child's educational needs can change over time, it will often be necessary for the school to review any additional assistance that is being provided to the child, in consultation with parents/guardians and the child's treating medical/allied health professionals, to assess:

- whether the additional assistance remains necessary and/or appropriate to the child's needs.
- whether the additional assistance is having the anticipated positive effect on the child's individual physical, functional, emotional, or educational goals; and
- whether it remains within the school's ability to continue to provide the additional assistance, given any limitations that may exist

Assessing and Mitigating Risk

To assist the school to discharge its safety responsibilities, *[insert school name here]* will adhere to an Occupational Health & Safety Program through which potential safety hazards are identified and analysed in terms of the likelihood of an event occurring, and the potential consequences if the event was to occur. A similar risk-based approach is taken with respect to Student Duty of Care, with the definitions of likelihood and consequences. *[Insert school name here]* may engage the services of Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) staff for the purpose of assessing student safety risks and determining how best to support the needs of the students, staff, and broader community.

Policy Evaluation and Review

[Drafting note for schools: The Policy is an evolving document that should be adapted and updated regularly, in consultation with the school community. It is important to ensure that the Policy is updated as the DOBCEL policy is updated and its application are regularly monitored and evaluated for effectiveness and, where required, adjustments are made. This process also ensures that the Policy is reflective of emerging issues and considers new data about a school's performance.]

Appendices

Related school policies

DOBCEL Complaints Handling Policy

DOBCEL Enrolment Policy

Restrictive Interventions Guidelines

Policy and Legislative Context

The information provided in this section of the guidelines draws substantially on the policies and guidelines of the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) regarding restraint and seclusion of students and the following legislation:

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.).

All teachers and schools owe students a duty of care and are required to take reasonable care to ensure student safety and their protection from reasonably foreseeable injuries. Moreover, it is recognised that staff in all schools are also owed a duty of care. DOBCEL is required to provide and maintain, so far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk. At any given time in a school setting there can be any number of catalysts that can trigger emotional or impulsive excessive reactions from students. Teachers need to respond to these reactions in positive ways to de-escalate situations and restore peace and calm. This policy is intended to offer information and support to staff and parents regarding uncommon but potential situations where teachers may have no control over what the student is choosing to do and are compelled to apply restrictive intervention to a student to prevent the risk of harm to the student or to others.

Students Exhibiting Complex and Challenging Behaviour

Effective support for students exhibiting complex and challenging behaviour requires a holistic response, involving school and community teams, the student and his/her family. This is best established by:

- development and implementation of a student safety plan;
- appropriate and targeted interventions, encompassing identification of learning and/ or behaviour needs, assessment, analysis and interpretation, learning and teaching strategies and ongoing evaluation;
- specialised support to inform planning as required.

The use of restraint and seclusion does not form part of a student safety plan and should not be identified as an appropriate intervention. It is to be applied only in cases of emergency and be considered a temporary measure.

Where a student is known to exhibit complex/ challenging behaviour, a risk assessment should also be undertaken. A risk assessment requires schools to identify the risks posed by the student (to themselves other students and situations) to consider various risk mitigation strategies.

It is to be noted that these guidelines apply not only to students who have previously been identified as exhibiting complex/challenging behaviour, but also to students who have a 'one-off episode' of complex and challenging behaviour.

Restrictive Intervention Guidelines include:

Every effort must be made to prevent the need for use of restraint or seclusion.

There are limited circumstances in which restraint or seclusion may be appropriate, it is important to remember that prevention is the best strategy.

In making the decision that any form of restraint or seclusion is required, DOBCEL Schools should be aware their actions may directly increase the risk of injury or trauma, both for the student and the staff member.

Restraint or seclusion must not be used at DOBCEL School on a regular or long-term basis.

Restraint or seclusion must not be used as a routine behaviour management technique or as a regular first response to poor behaviour.

Restraint or seclusion must not be used to punish or discipline a student or for convenience.

DOBCEL Schools **must not** use mechanical or chemical restraints as a means of controlling student behaviour in an emergency.

Where restraint or seclusion is determined as the best option in the circumstances, the least restrictive form of restraint/seclusion must be used for the minimum time possible.

Where a student is placed in a separate room for seclusion, appropriate supervision of the student will be always maintained.

The use of restraint/seclusion will cease as soon as the immediate danger for the student or others is averted.

DOBCEL Schools must not use any form of restraint that 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.

In all situations, where reasonable and practical, restraint will only be applied by staff who have been trained by an appropriate provider to ensure they are able to exercise good judgement in an emergency, taking into account both their duty of care to their students and their duty to ensure their own safety.

Three Conditions on the Use of Restraint or Seclusion

Restraint and seclusion will only be used in an emergency that satisfies the following three conditions:

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

Imminent threat of physical harm

The student's behaviour must pose an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the students or 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, this condition would be met if a student is threatening to hit someone with a cricket bat and is holding the cricket bat. Where the student is making verbal threats, but the staff member does not believe there is risk of imminent harm, the staff member should take appropriate action but this should not include restraint or seclusion.

The physical harm should be to the student, (i.e. self-harm) or another person (e.g. student or staff member). Damage to property alone is not sufficient to meet this condition. If the property damage poses imminent danger to nearby students, the first condition may be satisfied.

Reasonable in the circumstances

It must be reasonable in all the circumstances to restrain or seclude the student. DOBCEL Staff should consider whether restraint/seclusion is proportionate to the harm that is intended. For example, it may be reasonable to restrain a student in response to an imminent attack with a cricket bat, but it would be generally considered unreasonable to restrain a student in response to low level pushing.

In taking account of the circumstances, staff should consider:

- the student's age, year level and developmental level;
- the student's physical presentation – weight and stature;
- the relevance of any disability, impairment (including psychological conditions) or medical condition;
- the anticipated response of the student;
- the effect of the restraint/seclusion on the relationship with the student;
- the environment – including any specific hazards;
- the form of restraint/seclusion that is appropriate.

No less restrictive means of responding

There must be no less restrictive means of responding to the student's behaviour. Restraint/seclusion must be used as a last resort when all less restrictive options have been exhausted. The staff member must have considered the options and made a professional judgement that the alternatives were less likely to succeed in the circumstances.

Unless the three conditions are satisfied, restraint or seclusion will not be used at any DOBCEL School to:

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

DOBCEL Schools must not use physical restraint and seclusion unless immediately required to protect the safety of the student or any other person. In addition to this, restraint or seclusion should only be used when other methods of de-escalation of the situation have failed and a dangerous situation is imminent.

Restraint and seclusion are not used:

- as a routine method of punishment;
- as part of the school behaviour management philosophy, policy or procedure;
- to punish or discipline students for non-compliant behaviour, unless that creates a situation of imminent danger to the student or to others;
- to respond to verbal threats of harm from a student, except where there is reasonable belief that the threat will be immediately enacted or
- to punish or stop property destruction caused by the student unless the action is placing any person in immediate risk of harm.

Restraint or Seclusion may be used only when:

- there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the student or others; and where such action (i.e. to physically restrain or seclude) would be considered reasonable in all the circumstances and there is no restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.
- as with physical restraint, seclusion should only be used when it is immediately required to protect the safety of the student or any other person.

Decision to restrain/seclude

The first priority is the safety of all concerned in the incident. The decision to use restraint or seclusion rests with a teacher's professional judgement. Such decisions are made in times of high stress. DOBCEL Staff are encouraged to pause and conduct a dynamic risk assessment.

The decision about whether to use physical restraint or seclusion rests with the professional judgment of the staff member/s involved, who will need to take into account both their duty of care to their students, their right to protect themselves from harm and obligations under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Issues involved:

- use minimum force required to avoid the risk of harm or danger;
- only restrain for minimum duration necessary;
- type of restraint needs to factor in age of student, size, gender, any impairment, medical conditions, psychological conditions, likely response of student and the environment where the incident occurs and
- during restraint staff need to monitor the student for indicators of distress and should talk to the student, making it clear why this is happening and that it will stop when it is no longer necessary to protect the student or others.

Actions after the restraint/seclusion has been used

The principal is notified immediately of any instance when restraint or seclusion is involved.

The principal or a senior member of staff will contact the parent/guardian of the student following any incident of restraint or seclusion. Depending on circumstances, the principal may contact other parents.

Incidents involving restraint or seclusion are often stressful or traumatic for those involved. The wellbeing of students and staff is paramount.

Additional support for the student concerned may include:

- Arranging a PSG
- Participation in a review of their BSP
- Counselling

Support for staff involved may include:

- Debriefing in relation to the incident
- Access to the Employee Assistance Program
- Counselling or
- Professional learning

Other students who were involved or witnessed the incident may benefit from debriefing with chosen staff about the incident or professional counselling.

Recording and Reporting

DOBCEL Schools follows the reporting and recording requirements for serious incidents, using the Checklist for Principals (Appendix 4.)

The Record of Restraint/Seclusion form must be completed. A copy is retained by the principal and one copy is provided to DOBCEL Catholic Education Ballarat. Team Leader: Well Being

The principal must consider whether the use of restraint/seclusion amounts to Reportable Conduct and therefore needs to be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP).

After a restraint event has occurred the following needs to happen:

- Staff member to report the incident to the principal, add this to the Behaviour Tracker and Live Diaries.
- The school contacts the student's parents and provide details of what occurred.
- It would be most appropriate to hold a meeting to support parents, staff, and student by working through the issues that occurred.
- It may lead to discussions with Student Services from Catholic Education Ballarat.
- There may be need for setting up a behaviour support plan for the students to prevent a repeat episode.
- Other staff members or students who witnessed the incident may require debriefing or counselling support.

Maintaining records of incidents

As soon as possible after the incident a written record should be written by the staff member/s involved – describing the incident, the restraint and aftermath. The record is added to the student file, Behaviour Tracker and Live Diaries.

Details to be included:

- the name of the student/s and staff member/s involved
- date, time and location of the incident
- names of witnesses (staff and other students)
- what exactly happened (a brief factual account)

- any action taken to de-escalate the situation
- why physical intervention was used (if applicable)
- the nature of any physical intervention used
- how long the physical intervention lasted
- names of witnesses (staff and other students)
- the student's response and the outcome of the incident
- any injuries or damage to property
- immediate post incident actions, such as first aid or contact with emergency services
- details of contact with the student's parent/carer
- details of any post-incident support provided or organised

The principal should also arrange for all staff who were involved/present at the incident to prepare a statement / record of their involvement or observations of the incident

School leaders need also to consider the wellbeing of the staff member who is involved in physical restraint. The person may require counselling as well as medical attention due to physical strain or stress. This is an OHS situation and needs to be dealt with sensitively for the student and for the staff member.

Review of Processes

The Leadership Team should consider future preventative and de-escalation strategies so as to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident in the future. This may involve a review of processes or policy, staff training or additional staff support.

Following an incident involving restraint or seclusion, DOBCEL Schools will review school processes including the Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures, Emergency management plan and the student's BSP or SSP, if they have one.

The review or development of a student's BSP or SSP will be done in consultation with the student's parent/guardian and, if appropriate, the student. This review or development will include:

- The underlying cause or purpose of the behaviour that led to the use of restraint/seclusion.
- The supportive practices and strategies that worked well for the student.
- The key elements that led to the escalation of behaviour.
- Further adjustments or supports that could prevent a repetition of the event leading to restraint/seclusion.
- The review of the incident will also consider the need for training, professional learning of staff or consultation with support agencies.

Staff Training

DOBCEL Staff are trained on effective alternatives to restraint and seclusion, such as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) to recognise when student behaviour is escalating and how to take appropriate steps to de-escalate a situation.

Post-incident Checklist for Principals

INITIAL RESPONSE

- Provide immediate support to staff (i.e. organise medical checks, ensure basic needs are met, offer reassurance, monitor and allow opportunity to calm down).
- Provide immediate support to student(s) (i.e. organise medical checks, ensure basic needs are met, offer reassurance, monitor and allow opportunity to calm down).
- Contact the student's parents
- Consult with the Educational Consultant at the Catholic Education Ballarat regarding the next phase/support.

REPORT AND RECORD THE INCIDENT

- Report to Worksafe if required
- Ensure all staff involved provide the principal with a written record of involvement/observations
- Complete injury/incident report for school's accident/incident register
- Ensure accurate student record is placed in student's file
- Advise any injured staff of Work Cover entitlements
- Complete Record of Restraint/Seclusion (if relevant) send to CEB
- Consider whether Reportable Conduct occurred and action accordingly.

POST-INCIDENT SUPPORT

- Provide post-incident support to staff
- Provide post-incident support to student(s)
- Consider approach regarding students, i.e. restorative practice, sanctions.

REVIEW PROCESSES

- Inform health and safety representatives (if any) of the incident and give them the opportunity to participate in evaluation of the school response.
- Evaluate risk assessment and management processes. Conduct a new risk assessment
- Review and if necessary, update general school policies including Emergency management plan and Behaviour Management policy and procedures. Communicate any changes to parents and students.

- Assess the effectiveness of the student’s BSP or SSP if they had one. If the student does not have a BSP or SSP, consider whether this should be developed. Consider access to additional information and specialist advice where necessary.
- Evaluate the efficacy of emergency response equipment and systems, upgrade if needed.
- Consider the training needs of staff

Appendix 5

Record of Restraint/Seclusion Form

Copy to be sent to: DOBCEL, Catholic Education Ballarat. Team Leader: Well Being

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				
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.				