

Policy on Management of Actual or Potential Aggression

Benincasa is a school for children with severe emotional/behavioural difficulties. In accordance with the ethos of Benincasa pupils and staff in the school have the right to:

- Recognition of a unique identity
- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Learn and work in a safe environment
- Be protected from any form of abuse

Pupils and their parents have further right to:

- Individual consideration of needs by staff who have responsibility for the protection of each pupil.
- Expect staff to undertake duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies.
- Be informed of the schools Behaviour Policy and other relevant policies including policy on bullying and complaints as well as the expected conduct of pupils and staff.

The majority of pupils in the school respond positively to staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of the pupils and staff.

All staff in the school will be proactive in maintaining such structures which will enable each pupil: as

- To be aware of the Behaviour Policy
- To understand that positive behaviour is promoted in the school that there are consequences for negative choices and to know what these consequences entail.

The staff will acquaint themselves with the Behaviour Policy in all its detail so that they:

- Understand their duty of care for each pupil
- Have the necessary knowledge to support the pupil
- Are able to indicate to the pupils the choices and consequences of their behaviours.
- Follow the behaviour policy.
- Follow the MAPA Behavioural De-escalation Plan for each pupil.

After an incident, the MAPA Response Continuum will be followed. This includes:

- Re-establishing communication
- Support of all pupils and staff involved
- Identifying behavioural triggers and discussing possible alternatives to such triggers.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without risk to pupils, visitors, staff, property or the environment. Not every incident can be prevented. However, many situations can be defused early as staff have the proper training and learn how to respond productively during crisis moments. Staff should bear in mind that this procedure could be counterproductive for children who have experienced traumatic violence and for children who have sensory issues. The Board of Management is satisfied that the **Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (M.A.P.A.)** programme, developed by the **Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)** will be used as an approach to behaviour management in this area.

Management of Actual or Potential Aggression.

The Management of Actual or Potential Aggression training program is a holistic behaviour management system based on the philosophy of providing the best care, safety, and security for pupils and staff, even during the most violent moments. The program focuses on preventing disruptive behaviour by communicating with individuals respectfully and with concern for their well-being. The program teaches physical interventions only as a last resort - when a pupil presents an imminent danger to self or others - and all physical interventions taught are designed to be non-harmful, non-invasive, and to maintain the pupil's dignity. Follow-up strategies are also key components of the training program.

The Management of Actual or Potential Aggression program not only teaches staff to respond effectively to the warning signs that someone is beginning to lose control, but also addresses how staff can deal with their own stress, anxieties, and emotions when confronted with these challenging situations.

Training

- The Board of Management expects all staff to avail of training in MAPA in order to provide the best possible support for pupils and colleagues.
- Training for all staff shall be made available. This is the responsibility of the Principal with the post holder who may be assigned responsibility to this area. Failure to undertake training provided will result in an interview with the Principal who may then refer the matter to the Board. A minimum of two months notice will be given. Training is compulsory.
- Staff who do not engage in training provided by the Board will be expected to undertake MAPA training at the next available training session provided by MAPA. This will be at the staff member's own expense unless otherwise agreed with the Board.

Procedures

- In the event of an incident escalating, MAPA de-escalation strategies will be followed.
- However, if the incident continues to escalate, the staff member (normally a teacher) will ascertain if the occurring incident is of such a serious nature as to warrant the use of MAPA physical intervention.
- The procedure for MAPA (Appendix 1.) will be followed precisely with support as required from other staff.
- Physical intervention will be used for as short a period as is necessary to move the pupil to a safe location. This may include the use of the Time Out Room.
- In the event of a physical intervention a record of the incident will be written up and signed by all participants, this will be placed in the pupil's file and a copy kept in the Principal's Serious Incidents file.
- Parents will be informed.
- When an incident has concluded, it is recommended that the pupil and staff involved avail of an appropriate break where possible following consultation with the Principal, before resuming duties.
- If an injury has occurred which causes a staff member to be absent for more than three days, a report shall be made to the Health and Safety Authority.
- Each incident will be reviewed at a meeting with participating staff and Principal if the participants or Principal consider this necessary.
- If parents/guardians wish to make a complaint in relation to any incident, the Complaints Procedure will be followed.