

Student Behaviour Management Policy

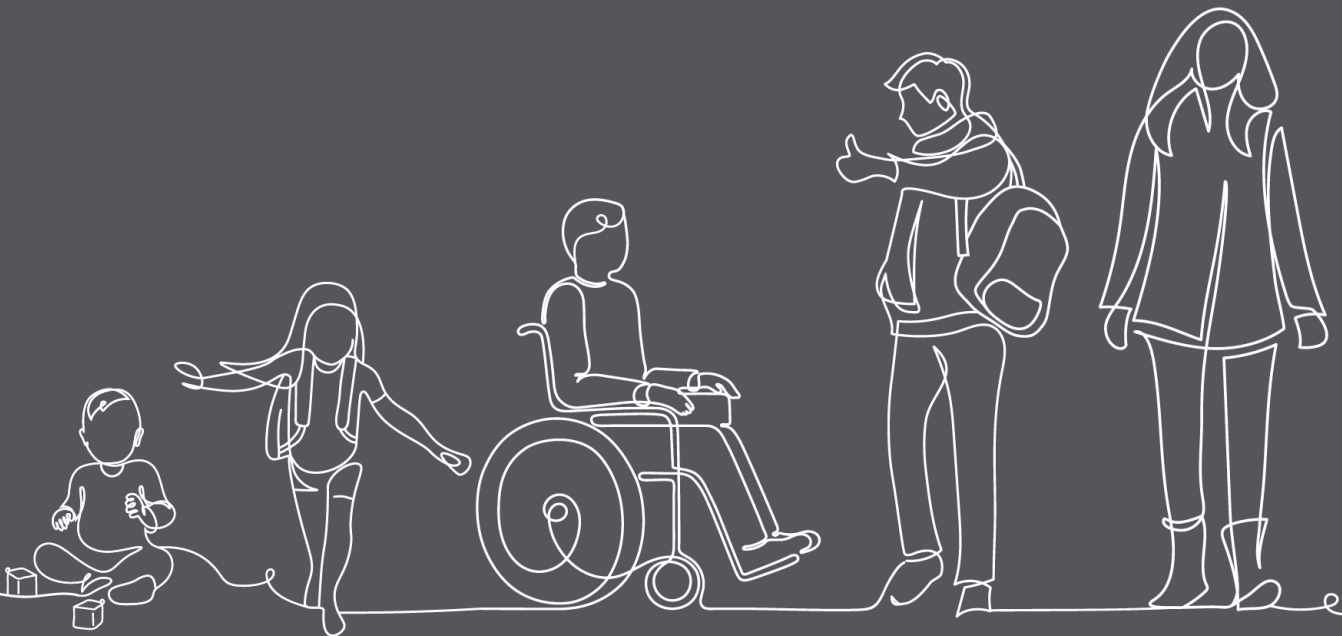


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1 Purpose

Positive and respectful behaviour is critical for student engagement and wellbeing, and encourages learning and attainment.

This Policy supports the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and families in Tasmanian Government schools.

This Policy applies to all Tasmanian Government schools.

This Policy supports the Department's obligations under sections 128- 136 of the *Education Act 2016* (Tas).

This Policy outlines:

- what constitutes unacceptable behaviours for students
- requirements for responding to unacceptable behaviour of students
- minimum standards in preventing and responding to bullying.

2 Policy Statement

Schools use a range of approaches to support and promote safe and respectful student behaviour.

When responding to unacceptable student behaviour schools use restorative practices and principles and consider the impact of any behavioural response on student learning.

All Tasmanian Government Schools **MUST** implement this Policy.

Schools **MUST** make this Policy available on their school website.

Schools may develop school-specific guidelines to support implementation of this Policy in their school context.

This Policy supports implementation of requirements under:

- [Secretary's Instruction No 3 for Unacceptable Behaviour of Students and Volunteers at, and Visitors to, State Schools or School Activities](#)
- [Secretary's Instruction No 4 for Suspension, Exclusion, Expulsion or Prohibition of State School Students](#)
- [Ministerial Instruction No 7 for Eliminating or Ameliorating Risks to Health and Safety of Persons at School](#)

The content of this Policy aligns with the [Department for Education, Children and Young People's \(DECYP\) values](#), with a commitment to ensuring that the values are reflected in all policy and processes, and in response to unacceptable behaviour.

Safeguarding the rights of all children and young people to have an education, to be heard, and to be kept safe from harm is a priority for the Department.

Safeguarding describes a culture in which every person understands their responsibility to uphold the rights of the child and to have the child at the centre of every decision that affects them. This culture of continuous improvement has prevention as its overriding objective while it strengthens awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness to the signs and effects of trauma or abuse.

This Policy does not include behaviour of adults or volunteers at schools. See the [Respectful School Visitor and Volunteer Behaviour Procedure](#).

Implementation of this Policy is supported by the [Student Behaviour Management Procedure](#).

3 Roles and Responsibilities

Parents and carers have a responsibility to work with the school in accordance with this Policy and play a key role in supporting their child to behave respectfully.

We have a responsibility to use restorative practices and principles to support our students to reflect on their behaviour, build and repair affected relationships, and to address unacceptable behaviour between students that occurs outside of school or school activities if we become aware of such behaviour.

4 Unacceptable behaviour of students

This Policy supports implementation of the [Secretary's Instruction No 3 for Unacceptable Behaviour of Students and Volunteers at, and Visitors to, State Schools or School Activities](#), which outlines what constitutes unacceptable behaviour of a student at a school.

What constitutes unacceptable behaviour is dependent on the context and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. We recognise and take into account that, for some students, unacceptable behaviour may be associated with factors such as disability, trauma, abuse or learning difficulties.

4.1 Managing Health and Safety Risks

A Principal MUST develop and maintain strategies to remove or reduce the likelihood of a student from posing a health and safety risk to themselves or any other person at the school in line with [Ministerial Instruction No 7 for Eliminating or Ameliorating Risks to Health and Safety of Persons at School](#).

All schools will do what is reasonably practicable to assess and address the health and safety risks posed by a student's behaviour. This includes support for students with risk-related behaviours in accessing education, while also managing health and safety risks to the student and other persons at the school.

4.2 Roads on campus

The [Education Regulations 2017](#) provides a principal of a State school with the authority to determine the conditions under which vehicles may be driven, ridden, parked and removed on or from a campus of the school. A breach of these conditions by a student constitutes unacceptable behaviour and can be managed in accordance with this Policy.

5 Bullying

5.1 Definition

Tasmania agreed to the following national definition of bullying through the Education Council in 2018:

'Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm.

Bullying can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.¹

5.2 Preventing bullying

The Department *for* Education, Children and Young People does not tolerate any form of bullying in Tasmanian Government Schools.

When bullying occurs it can have a serious impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Ensuring that students are safe and free from discrimination, harassment and bullying is a shared responsibility between school staff, parents and carers, students and the community.

Schools use a range of approaches to support and promote safe and respectful student behaviour:

- Preventing and responding to bullying, including cyberbullying, is a shared responsibility of all staff, students, parents and carers. All members of our school can contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.
- Schools have a responsibility to support students involved in bullying, including cyberbullying, which is affecting a student's learning and/or wellbeing at school, even when the unacceptable behaviour has occurred off school campus and/or outside of school hours.
- When addressing bullying, non-punitive and restorative approaches should be utilised. Both the student being bullied and the student who was bullying must be provided with support (eg informal support from staff, formal counselling).

Schools are to encourage students who may be impacted by bullying behaviours (including those who are witnesses) to report concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Professional learning builds the capacity of educators to maintain positive classroom environments, identify early signs of bullying and respond with appropriate intervention strategies.

It is important that all school staff are supported with professional learning on teaching respectful behaviours and preventing, identifying and responding to bullying behaviour.

5.3 Responding to bullying

- When responding to bullying, schools **MUST** ensure that:
 - any responses to behaviour recognise and take into account that for some students, unacceptable behaviour may be associated with factors such as disability, trauma, abuse or a learning impairment
 - approaches are non-punitive and restorative
 - all reported incidents of bullying are taken seriously, responded to sensitively, appropriately investigated and addressed
 - all students involved in or impacted by the bullying behaviour are provided with support (eg informal support from staff, formal counselling)
 - details of the incident and the actions taken are recorded appropriately.

¹ National definition of bullying Education Council 2018 'Connected: A Community Approach to Bullying Prevention within the School Gates and Beyond' (accessed 6 July 2022)

6 Responding to unacceptable behaviour of students

Detention, suspension, exclusion, expulsion and prohibition MUST only be imposed for unacceptable behaviour of a student that occurred at school or a school activity.

- Behavioural responses that result in time away from school (eg suspension) MUST only be used as a last resort or to ensure the safety of students and staff at the school.
- Responses to behaviour MUST recognise and take into account that for some students, unacceptable behaviour may be associated with factors such as disability, trauma, abuse or learning difficulties.
- When responding to unacceptable behaviour of a student at school or a school activity, teachers and principals MUST:
 - identify whether the unacceptable behaviour poses a risk to the health and safety of themselves, staff or students
 - seek to understand the issues contributing to the student's unacceptable behaviour before applying behavioural responses such as suspension, unless there is an immediate risk to the health or safety of others
 - apply strategies and approaches that are developmentally appropriate for the student
 - support the student's continued learning and access to education
 - have in place a range of escalating approaches and strategies that are underpinned by restorative practices and principles.
- This MAY include:
 - talking to the student about their unacceptable behaviour
 - understanding whether there is anything going on outside of school that may be impacting on their behaviour (if a child discloses any form of abuse follow the process in the [Mandatory Reporting Procedure](#))
 - seeking appropriate support for the student
 - seeking appropriate support for staff (see [Employee Support Services](#) and [Principal Wellbeing Individual Supports](#)).
- Harmful sexual behaviours refers to a broad range of sexual behaviours in children and young people. This includes behaviours that affect a child or young person's own development, as well as behaviours that are coercive, sexually aggressive, or predatory to others. Follow the [Flowchart for Responding to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of harmful sexual behaviour](#).

6.1 School Dress Code

- The *Secretary's Instruction No 6 for State School Student Dress Code* requires principals to detail how non-compliance with dress code or uniform will be dealt with in their school. Students' circumstances and capacity to comply will be considered when determining the appropriate response. Behavioural responses for non-compliance will not impact the learning of the student, unless a safety requirement has not been met (eg if a student is wearing 'open-toed' shoes they may not be able to participate in a workshop activity).
- A principal MUST detail how non-compliance with dress code or uniform will be dealt with in their school, as required by Secretary's Instruction No 6 for State School Student Dress Code.

6.2 Unacceptable behaviour outside of a school environment

- Unacceptable behaviour outside of school may include bullying, including cyberbullying, discrimination and/or behaviour that is likely to bring a school into disrepute.
- If schools are made aware that unacceptable behaviour between students has taken place (at school, a school activity or outside of school) and that behaviour is having a negative impact on student learning and/or wellbeing at school, the school MUST use restorative practices and principles.
- Detention, suspension, exclusion, expulsion or prohibition can only be applied when unacceptable behaviour of a student occurs at school or at a school activity.

7 Applying behavioural responses

- A behaviour response is a response to unacceptable behaviour which can range from the use of restorative practices and principles to a response that involves loss of privileges or time away from school (eg detention, suspension, further suspension, exclusion, expulsion or prohibition).
- Suspension, further suspension and exclusion result in forced disengagement from the school environment.
- Any behavioural response MUST be a proportionate response to the unacceptable behaviour.
- When considering whether to apply a behavioural response, consideration MUST be given to how often the unacceptable behaviour occurs, its duration and any other patterns relevant to the unacceptable behaviour.
- Alternative educational instruction MUST be made available for the student by the principal during a period of suspension, further suspension or exclusion to ensure continued learning and engagement, and may provide the student with an opportunity to reflect on the unacceptable behaviour.

8 Detention and in-school suspension

- If detention is used as a behavioural response, the principal MUST follow the detention requirements outlined in the Student Behaviour Management Procedure.
- If in-school suspension is used as a behavioural response, the principal MUST follow the in-school suspension requirements outlined in the Student Behaviour Management Procedure.
- If a student is suspended or excluded from school the Principal MUST ensure the student is provided with appropriate educational instruction until they return to school.

9 Suspension, period of further suspension, and exclusion

9.1 Suspension requirements

- Suspension will only be applied by the principal.
- Before the principal can issue a non-urgent suspension to a student for unacceptable behaviour, they will first attempt to resolve the behaviour by:
 - seeking to understand the issues contributing to the student's unacceptable behaviour, whether they be school-based issues or issues outside of the school that are impacting on the student's behaviour (eg family or relationship problems)
 - providing assistance or referral to appropriate supports
 - talking to the student about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour at school, and the process if the unacceptable behaviour continues

- involving the parents or carers in discussion on how to address the student's unacceptable behaviour
- the use of other strategies outlined in this Policy.
- Except for circumstances that warrant the immediate removal of a student (immediate suspension), non-urgent suspension will only be used where restorative practices and principles are unable to resolve the factors contributing to the unacceptable behaviour.
- The principal will only immediately suspend a student where the principal determines that:
 - the student has behaved or is behaving in an unacceptable manner in accordance with the Respectful Student Behaviour Policy
 - the behaviour posed or poses a risk to the health or safety of another school student, a teacher or another person at the school
 - that risk may be removed only by the immediate removal of the student from the school.
- Suspensions should end during the term in which they are applied, to ensure a student can re-enter the school at the beginning of the subsequent term. Suspensions may only apply across school terms where there are exceptional circumstances.
- The principal will not impose suspensions consecutively in response to the same instance of unacceptable behaviour.

9.2 Exclusion requirements

- A period of exclusion may be granted where processes for managing unacceptable behaviour have not resolved the behaviour and a more serious response is required or further time is needed to make arrangements for the student's re-entry to school.
- Requests for approval of exclusion will be forwarded to Student Support Leaders and the Director of Student Support.

9.3 Beyond suspension, further suspension or exclusion

- If the principal or the Director of Student Support believes that the unacceptable behaviour is so serious that expulsion or prohibition may be more appropriate, they will refer the matter to the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People.

9.4 Educational instructional requirements

- The principal MUST provide students who have been suspended, further suspended or excluded with appropriate educational instruction until they return to school.
- If the principal is unable to arrange for educational instruction to be provided to the student before they commence suspension (eg where the suspension occurs late in the school day), a parent or carer may be required to collect the educational instruction from the school the following school day.
- The principal may also consider emailing the work to be completed where it is known that the student has internet and computer access.
- School staff will assist the principal to determine appropriate educational instruction, including the preparation of material as appropriate.
- The principal MUST arrange for review of the educational instruction as part of the re-entry process.
- Students are expected to complete the educational instruction provided to them.

- Parents and carers should support their child to complete the educational instruction provided (eg this could include contacting the school for support or advice).

10 Re-entry to school

- The school MUST consider the student's transition back to school and any disruption to their learning as a result of a period of suspension, further suspension, exclusion or expulsion from attending a Tasmanian Government school.
- The school MUST have a process for the student to re-enter the school following a period of suspension, further suspension or exclusion to support the student to build and repair relationships that have been affected by their behaviour and develop any strategies that may be necessary to support the student to re-engage in learning.
- The purpose of a re-entry conference is to ensure a mutual understanding between the student, parent or carer and staff for the future direction of the student's learning and expected behaviour.
- The re-entry conference MUST include documented support strategies to help manage any underlying behavioural issues or learning needs.

11 Related policies

- [Attendance Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Personal Information Protection and Your Right to Information Policy](#)
- [Respectful School Visitor and Volunteer Behaviour Procedure](#)
- [Restrictive Practices Policy](#)

12 Related procedures

- [Mandatory Reporting Procedure](#)
- [Restrictive Practices Procedure](#)
- [Student Behaviour Management Procedure](#)
- [Student Engagement Procedure](#)

13 Supporting information/tools

[De-escalation Response Plan](#)

[Department for Education, Children and Young People Risk Management Plan](#)

[Enrolment Process \(Doc ID: TASED-4-1797567314-8501\)](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions for Parents](#)

[Guide for Inclusive Practice](#)

[Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People](#)

[Parent Fact Sheet Student Behaviour in Tasmanian Government Schools](#)

[Parent Fact Sheet Online Safety](#)

[Parent Fact Sheet Staying Safe](#)

14 Definitions

Act

Means the *Education Act 2016* unless specified otherwise.

Bullying

An ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm.

Behavioural response

A response to unacceptable behaviour which can range from the use of restorative practices and principles to a response that involves loss of privileges or time away from school (i.e. detention, suspension, further suspension, exclusion, expulsion or prohibition).

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is an alternative label for online bullying, and describes bullying carried out through the internet and mobile devices.

Detention

Any relatively short period when a student is required to remain at school/in the classroom in a student's 'non-class' time (eg recess, lunchtime, recreation time, after school). Detention provides an opportunity for students to undertake additional learning in the school environment.

Discrimination

A less favourable treatment of a person because of a personal characteristic, such as race, gender, sexual orientation or disability, or treating everyone the same way where doing so has a disadvantageous effect on a person or group of person because of a shared personal characteristic.

Exclusion

The temporary withdrawal of a student's requirement to attend school for more than two weeks.

Expulsion

The full-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend a particular Tasmanian State school. MUST is to be construed as being mandatory.

Harassment

Involves unwanted and one-sided words or actions towards another person (or persons) that offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse. If harassment is repeatedly directed towards the same person, and especially if it continues after the targeted person has asked them to stop, it is considered to be bullying.

In-school suspension

The withdrawal of a student from their regular class/classes for a period of time determined by the principal. During an in-school suspension a student remains at the school but works away from other students under the supervision of teaching staff.

Parent or carer

A parent or a legal guardian or anyone with care and responsibility of a child.

Principal

The person in charge of a school or their delegate.

Prohibition

The full-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend a specific Tasmanian State school or any Tasmanian State school.

Punitive

Inflicting or intended as punishment.

Responsibilities: Must and May

Meaning of 'MUST', 'is to' and 'may':

- The word 'MUST' is to be construed as being mandatory.
- The words 'is to' and 'are to' are to be construed as being directory.
- The word 'may' is to be construed as being discretionary or enabling, as the context requires.

Restorative practices

A way of viewing relationship-building and behaviour support in schools that work to strengthen community among students and between students, teachers, and parents through educative processes. Restorative approaches focus on the problem, not the person, and look at the harm that has been done and the obligation on the part of those responsible to 'right the wrong' as much as possible. Restorative practices in schools are not limited to formal processes but are a continuum ranging from informal (eg class circles, impromptu restorative conferences or teacher-student conversations) to formal conferences (eg restorative conferences or family group conferences).

School activity (or event)

School-endorsed activities for their students that are held:

- at a venue which is outside of school campus or school property
- on school campus but outside of school hours. School activities may include: a sports or swimming carnival, an excursion, school camp, or an end of year concert.

School Association

Made up of the parents, staff and approved community members of a school. An Association exists for each Tasmanian State school, including primary schools, high schools, district schools and colleges.

School Association Committee

Represents the School Association, it undertakes administrative and decision making activities on behalf of the Association.

School Days

The days on which the school is to be open for educational instruction.

Secretary

Means the Secretary of the Department *for* Education, Children and Young People.

Suspension

The temporary withdrawal of a student's right to attend school for a period of two weeks or less (maximum 10 school days).

15 Legislation

Education Act 2016

Ministerial Instruction No 7 requires a principal to develop and maintain strategies to remove or reduce the likelihood of a student's behaviour posing a risk to the physical or psychological health or safety of the child or other persons at the school.

Schools MUST do what is reasonably practicable to assess and address the health and safety risks posed by a student's behaviour. This includes support for students with risk-related behaviours in accessing education, while also managing health and safety risks to the student and other persons at the school.

Secretary's Instruction No 3 for Unacceptable Behaviour at a State School

Secretary's Instruction No 4 for Suspension, Exclusion, Expulsion or Prohibition of State School Students

Authorised by: Trudy Pearce, Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People

Contact: Strategic Policy and Projects

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This document replaces: Respectful Student Behaviour Policy