



Cairns State Special
School

Student Code of Conduct 2020-2023

Every student succeeding

Every student succeeding is the shared vision of Queensland state schools. Our vision shapes regional and school planning to ensure every student receives the support needed to belong to the school community, engage purposefully in learning and experience academic success.

Queensland Department of Education
State Schools Strategy 2019-2023

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Endorsement

Principal Name:	Chris Simmons
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Date:	13/08/2020
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Date:	13/08/2020

Contents

Purpose	4
Principal's Foreword	4
Learning and Behaviour Statement	5
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	6
Consideration of Individual Circumstances	7
Student Wellbeing	8
Student Support Network	10
Whole School Approach to Discipline	11
PBL Expectations	12
Universal Support	14
Targeted Support	16
Intensive Support	17
Legislative Delegations	18
Legislation	18
Delegations	18
Disciplinary Consequences	19
School Policies	23
Temporary removal of student property	23
Use of mobile phones and other devices by students	25
Preventing and responding to bullying	27
Appropriate use of social media	29
Restrictive Practices	31
Critical Incidents	32
Related Procedures and Guidelines	33
Resources	33
Conclusion	34

Purpose

Cairns State Special School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff, where students have opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire values supportive of their lifelong wellbeing.

This Student Code of Conduct is designed to facilitate high standards of behaviour so that the learning and teaching in our school can be effective and students can participate positively within our school community.

Principal's Foreword

Cairns State Special School developed this plan in collaboration with our school community. Consultation with parents, community, staff and students was undertaken throughout the 2020 school year. The school team also work and consult with staff from Team-Teach Asia-Pacific and Regional Coordinator – Positive Behaviour for Learning and State Schooling – Support and Intervention.

The Cairns State Special School, Student Code of Conduct will undergo annual minor updates to reflect changing circumstances, data and staff. A review will be conducted every four years in line with the scheduled review process for the School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting cycle.

Learning and Behaviour Statement

All areas of Cairns State Special School are learning and teaching environments. We consider the Student Code of Conduct to be an opportunity for valuable social learning as well as a means of maximising the success of student learning programs.

We aim to assist students to develop self-management skills and take on the responsibility of their own decisions and choices. With parental and staff involvement, our school hopes to achieve a shared focus on behavioural issues and support plans which will provide safe and supportive learning environments. We recognise in many cases our students' disabilities impact upon their behaviour and this is considered.

Responsible behaviours are those which respect the rights and safety of others (both peers and adults.) Unacceptable behaviours are those that interfere with the rights and safety of others. They are aligned with the values, principles and expected standards outlined in the Department of Education (DoE) Code of School Behaviour.

Our Student Code of Conduct outlines our system for facilitating positive behaviours, preventing problem behaviour and responding to unacceptable behaviours. Through our school plan, shared expectations for student behaviour are plain to everyone, assisting to create and maintain a positive and productive learning and teaching environment, where ALL school community members have clear and consistent expectations and understandings of their role in the educational process.

Our school community has identified the following key skills to teach and promote our high standards of responsible behaviour and school values:

We wait. We listen. We communicate. We share. We are safe.

In supporting students in learning these skills, teachers are responsible for contextualising the skills for the students and the use of social stories, our PPT resource and modelling where required, to facilitate the learning of the skills.

Our school rules matrix details what the skills 'look like' across our school and community.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Cairns State Special School uses multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) as the foundation for our integrated approach to learning and behaviour. MTSS is a preventative, differentiated model grounded in practical strategies, targeted planning and data-informed decision-making. Based on a problem-solving model, in MTSS school staff match increasingly intensive interventions to the identified needs of individual students.

Tier	Prevention Description
1	<p>All students (100%) in the school receive support for their academic and behavioural development. Focus is on the whole-school implementation of both the Australian Curriculum and Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) expectations. This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teaching behaviours in the setting they will be used • being consistent when addressing challenging behaviour, while taking developmental norms and behavioural function into account • providing refresher lessons and targeted recognition throughout the school year so skills are ready and likely to be used when students need them • asking students and their families for their perspectives on school climate, instruction, reinforcement, and discipline so improvements in Tier 1 may be made.
2	<p>Targeted instruction and supports for some students (10-15%) are more intense than Tier 1 services, providing more time and specialisation in services from a range of school-based staff to enable students to meet the required academic and behavioural standards.</p> <p>Tier 2 supports build on the lessons provided at Tier 1, and may prevent the need for more intensive interventions. Tier 2 supports are provided to small groups of students with similar needs, offering more time and/or detailed instruction on the Australian Curriculum or particular aspects of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) expectations. The types of interventions offered at this level will vary, but all have certain things in common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a clear connection between the skills taught in the interventions and the school-wide expectations. • interventions require little time of classroom teachers and are easy to sustain • variations within each intervention are limited • interventions have a good chance of working (e.g., they are “evidence-based” interventions that are matched to the student’s need). <p>If the school data indicates that more than 10-15% of students require targeted services, then a review of Tier 1 is needed to address the basic implementation and quality of instruction.</p>
3	<p>Individualised services for few students (2-5%) who require the most intensive support a school can provide. These are usually delivered in very small groups or on an individual basis.</p> <p>Tier 3 supports continue to build on the lessons and supports provided at Tiers 1 and 2, becoming more individualised and more intensive until teams can identify what is needed for a student to be successful. Tier 3 supports are based on the underlying reasons for a student’s behaviour (their FBA) and should include strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PREVENT problem behaviour • TEACH the student an acceptable replacement behaviour

- REINFORCE the student's use of the replacement behaviour
- MINIMISE the payoff for problem behaviour.

Tier 3 supports exist along a continuum. Many students can benefit from a simple (or brief) Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) that identifies unique strategies to help the student achieve success. A smaller percentage of students may require a more comprehensive FBA that includes a more thorough process for data collection, teaming, and problem solving. A much smaller percentage of students may need an intensive FBA and wraparound plan that includes personnel from outside agencies and rigorous problem solving procedures.

Consideration of Individual Circumstances

Staff at Cairns State Special School take into account students' individual circumstances, such as their behaviour history, disability, mental health and wellbeing, religious and cultural considerations, home environment and care arrangements when teaching expectations, responding to inappropriate behaviour or applying a disciplinary consequence.

In considering the individual circumstances of each student, we recognise that the way we teach, the support we provide and the way we respond to students will differ. This reflects the principle of equality, where every student is given the support they need to be successful. ***This also means that not everyone will be treated the same, because treating everyone the same is not fair.*** For example, some students need additional support to interpret or understand an expectation. Others may benefit from more opportunities to practise a required skill or behaviour. For a small number of students, the use of certain disciplinary consequences may be considered inappropriate or ineffective due to complex trauma or family circumstances. These are all matters that our teachers and principal consider with each individual student in both the instruction of behaviour and the response to behaviour.

Our teachers are also obliged by law to respect and protect the privacy of individual students and we will not disclose or discuss information with anyone but the student's family without permission. School staff take all matters, such as bullying, very seriously and will address them appropriately. We expect that parents and students will respect the privacy of other students and families.

Parents who have concerns about the behaviour of another student at the school, or the way our staff have responded to their behaviour, are encouraged to make an appointment with the principal to discuss the matter.

Student Wellbeing

Cairns State Special School offers a range of programs and services to support the wellbeing of students in our school. We encourage parents and students to speak with their Home Group Teacher or make an appointment to meet with the guidance officer, if they would like individual advice about accessing particular services.

Learning and wellbeing are inextricably linked — students learn best when their wellbeing is optimised, and they develop a strong sense of wellbeing when they experience success in learning. The [student learning and wellbeing framework](#) supports state schools with creating positive school cultures and embedding student wellbeing in all aspects of school life through connecting the learning environment, curriculum and pedagogy, policies, procedures and partnerships for learning and life.

Curriculum and pedagogy

Schools build the foundations for wellbeing and lifelong learning through curriculum embedding [personal and social capabilities](#) (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social management) in the implementation of the [P–12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework](#).

Schools acknowledge the positive impact that a meaningful relationship between teacher and students can have on students' academic and social outcomes.

Policy and expectations

Within a school community there are specific health and wellbeing issues that will need to be addressed for the whole school, specific students, or in certain circumstances.

Specialised health needs

Cairns State Special School works closely with parents to ensure students with specialised health needs, including those requiring specialised health procedures, have access to a reasonable standard of support for their health needs whilst attending school or school-based activities.

This means that appropriate health plans are developed and followed for students with specialised health needs, that staff are aware of the student's medical condition and that an appropriate number of staff have been trained to support the student's health condition.

Medications

Cairns State Special School requires parent consent and medical authorisation to administer any medication (including over-the-counter medications) to students. For students requiring medication to be administered during school hours, the school can provide further information and relevant forms.

For students with a long-term health condition requiring medication, parents need to provide the school with a [Request to administer medication at school](#) form signed by the prescribing health practitioner.

Cairns State Special School maintains a minimum of one adrenaline auto-injector and asthma reliever/puffer, stored in the school's first aid room to provide emergency first aid medication if required.

Mental health

Cairns State Special School implements early intervention measures and treatments for students where there is reasonable belief that a student has a mental health difficulty. This includes facilitating the development, implementation and periodic review of a [Student Plan](#).

Suicide prevention

Cairns State Special School staff who notice suicide warning signs in a student seek help immediately from the principal, their delegate or school guidance officer.

When managing a mental health crisis, schools call 000 when there is an imminent threat to the safety of students in the first instance, and where necessary, provide first aid. In all other situations, Cairns State Special School staff follow suicide intervention and prevention advice by ensuring:

- the student is not left alone
- their safety and the safety of other students and staff is maintained
- students receive appropriate support immediately
- parents are advised
- all actions are documented and reported.

Suicide postvention

In the case of a suicide of a student that has not occurred on school grounds, Cairns State Special School enacts a postvention response, by communicating with the family of the student and ensuring immediate support is provided to students and staff who may be affected.

Where a suicide has occurred on school grounds or at a school event, Cairns State Special School staff immediately enact the School Emergency Response Plan and communicate with the family of the student and ensure immediate support is provided to students and staff who may be affected.

Student Support Network

Cairns Special School provides a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach ensuring educational, medical, paramedical, and other support services maximise educational outcomes for our students. A wide range of disciplines are represented within the school and accessed in the community, to cater to the diverse learning needs and priorities of our students.

Cairns State Special School is proud to have a comprehensive Student Support Network in place to help the social, emotional and physical wellbeing of every student. In addition to the assistance provided by Home Group Teachers, we have a team of professionals whose dedicated roles are to help ensure our school is an inclusive, nurturing environment.

Role	What they do
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> oversees and provides advice and support across all aspects of schooling monitors attendance, behaviour and academic data to identify areas of additional need, in collaboration with school community.
Deputy Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leadership of Student Support Network to promote an inclusive, positive school culture monitors attendance, behaviour and academic data to identify areas of additional need, in collaboration with school community.
Guidance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> liaises with parents, teachers, or other external health providers as needed to support the individual needs of students. liaises with the Deputy Principal in relation to all processes related to Out of Home Care (OOHC).
Chairperson – Positive Behavior for Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lead role for implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
Department of Education – Nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> works with school staff to build their competence and confidence to safely manage procedures and interventions required by students with specialised health needs provides assessment, health management planning, training and ongoing support and supervision for students with specialised health needs.
Department of Education – Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology services within the Department of Education support schools to meet the needs of students through differentiation, planning individualised support strategies and working with staff to build capability.
Home Group Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> case manage students in their Home Group responsible for student welfare provides continuity of contact for students and their families through the year of schooling ensures students feel safe and comfortable and want to come to school nurtures a sense of belonging to the home group and school

Regional and statewide support services supplement the school network and include: Principal Advisor Student Protection, Mental Health Coach, Autism Coach, Inclusion Coach, Success Coach, Advisory Visiting Teachers and Senior Guidance Officers.

Whole School Approach to Discipline

Cairns State Special School uses Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) as the multi-tiered system of support for discipline in the school. This is a whole-school approach, used in all classrooms and programs offered through the school, including sporting activities and excursions.

PBL is an evidence-based framework used to:

- analyse and improve student behaviour and learning outcomes
- ensure that only evidence-based practices are used correctly by teachers to support students
- continually support staff members to maintain consistent school and classroom improvement practices.

At our school, we believe that teaching discipline is a part of the overall teaching and learning approach in our school. Our staff take responsibility for making their expectations clear, for providing supportive instruction about how to meet these expectations and strive to use behavioural incidents as opportunities to re-teach.

The development of the Cairns State Special School Student Code of Conduct is an opportunity to explain the PBL framework with parents and students, and gain their support to implement a consistent approach to teaching behaviour. The language and expectations of PBL can be used in any environment, including the home setting for students. Doing everything we can do to set students up for success is a shared goal of every parent and school staff member.

Any students or parents who have questions or would like to discuss the Student Code of Conduct or PBL are encouraged to speak with the Home Group Teacher or make an appointment to meet with the principal.

Team-Teach

Cairns State Special School has chosen Team-Teach for whole school implementation.

Team-Teach provides an accredited training framework designed to focus on **positive behaviour support** approaches, with an emphasis on **de-escalation, risk and restraint reduction**.

Team-Teach objectives:

- To develop shared values which promote the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to implement Team-Teach in the workplace
- To develop positive handling skills in behaviour support including verbal and non verbal communication, diversion and de-escalation and safe, effective interventions.
- To develop skills in positive listening and learning.

All staff are provided regular Team-Teach training to maintain currency.

PBL Expectations

Our staff are committed to delivering a high quality of education for every student, and believe all adults in the school, whether visiting or working, should meet the same five Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) expectations in place for students.

At Cairns State Special School we emphasise the importance of directly teaching all students the behaviours we want them to demonstrate at school.

Communicating behavioural expectations is a form of universal behaviour support - a strategy directed towards all students, designed to prevent inappropriate behaviour and provide a framework for responding to unacceptable behaviour.

Our school adopts a holistic approach to promoting learning engagement including:

- a shared philosophy
- a shared approach
- clearly defined expectations and strategies
- an emphasis on positive, proactive strategies
- a non-coercive environment

These are achieved through:

- open and appropriate lines of communication across the school (school values are a central part of formal communication)
- administrative and peer support
- creative and flexible engagement in the school curriculum
- expertise from both within and outside the school
- a team approach
- restorative practices

As a school, we recognise a wide range of support needs. Our universal approach shapes, supports and recognises appropriate behaviours in all students. Many students will have little or no difficulties. Some of our students will need additional targeted behaviour support and timely intervention on some occasions. For a variety of reasons, a smaller group of students may not respond to these early efforts and will need more intensive behaviour support and/or flexible learning options to assist them to continue their learning.

The School Wide Expectations Matrix below outlines our agreed rules and specific behavioural expectations in all school settings.

Our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Team meets every five weeks to consider and develop actions aligned to our annual action plan. The team also examines and analyses positive behaviour and incident data at five weekly intervals, sharing data analysis with staff and community and inviting feedback.

Cairns State Special School – Expectations Matrix

	LEARNING AREAS	PLAYGROUND	TOILET	ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE
We wait	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are quiet We are still 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We go one at a time We follow the game rules We wait in the waiting spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We wait if the dot is red We go if the dot is green 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We wait in the arrival and departure area
We listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We look/watch We are quiet We show whole body listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We move with the music We listen to the teacher's voice We listen to each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We follow the routine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We listen for adult instruction We listen for our name
We communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use friendly words We respect all communication attempts We use our individual communication system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use friendly words We respect all communication attempts We ask for help We use our individual communication system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use our individual communication system We let someone know we need to go We ask for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use our individual communication system
We share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We take turns We ask before taking We respecting the response in turn taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We take turns We follow the time limit for items/activities We ask before taking We respect the response in turn taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We go one at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We move one at a time through the gate We move one at a time on to and off the bus We share the seats
We are safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are in the right place We respect personal space We move safely We have safe hands and feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are in the right place We respect personal space We move safely We have safe hands and feet We wear our hats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We move safely We close the door 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are in the right place We respect personal space We move safely We have safe hands and feet

Universal Support

Our Student Code of Conduct, facilitates the development of behaviours which promote learning by providing a safe, supportive and productive environment through the Positive Handling approach, as outlined in the Team Teach program of professional learning. Positive Handling may involve aspects of the following:

- **environmental influences**
- **positive programming**
- **medical / dietary intervention** (where appropriate)

Environmental influences:

This involves consideration of the environment/s in which the student is required to function. Changing certain aspects of the environment may be necessary if data suggests intolerance to certain aspects.

In the **classroom / school environment** we consider:

- levels of stimulation
- furniture and equipment
- noise levels
- numbers and group dynamics
- classroom routine and structure
- seating arrangements
- communication methods with students

In **community environments** we consider:

- choosing community situations that will enhance appropriate behaviour
- choosing settings in which the students can use functional skills related to Curriculum programming and individual goals
- some settings that are essential aspects to daily life are very challenging or stressful to some students due to noise, crowding etc - plan programs carefully
- provide support in situations that the student/s find challenging. Increase tolerance by exposing student/s to the situation for brief periods using a scaffolded model with incremental steps to increase tolerance. Provide additional assistance, visual prompts, verbal cues and sensory strategies.
- choose community situations that will not act as a trigger for unwanted behaviours

Positive programming:

At Cairns State Special School, quality curriculum and pedagogy are viewed as the cornerstone of positive programming. Teachers provide curriculum programs that are engaging and meaningful for students and accordingly adjusted to meet student needs.

In addition to this, we use the framework of the Essential Skills for Classroom Management (ESCM) as a way to inform positive programming in the classroom environment. Teachers are trained in the ESCM and peer observation and feedback processes will be in place to support teachers in implementing these strategies. **Essential Skills are outlined below.**

Essential Skill	Description
1. Establishing expectations	Making rules, displaying rules visually, social stories etc
2. Giving instructions	Telling students what to do – clearly, with visual supports, short focused instructions.
3. Waiting and scanning	Stopping to assess what is happening
4. Cueing with parallel acknowledgment	Praising a particular student to prompt others
5. Body language encouraging	Smiling, nodding, gesturing and moving near
6. Descriptive encouraging	Praise describing behaviour
7. Selective attending	Not obviously reacting to some bad behaviour
8. Redirecting to the learning	Prompting on-task behaviour
9. Giving a choice	Describing the student's options and likely consequences of their behaviour
10. Following through	Doing what you said you would

Medical / Dietary intervention (where appropriate)

Medical conditions, poor health or dietary problems may contribute to behavioural change. These may include disability specific issues, intolerance to foods and allergies. We maintain detailed records and refer concerns to Integrated Services as well as to parents.

Parents and carers are responsible for medical referral, but collaboration between medical personnel and school is encouraged and these issues can be addressed during student welfare meetings or as part of the ICP process.

The Positive Handling Approach outlined above, has clear links to Education Queensland's *Learning and Wellbeing Framework* which advocates a whole school approach to student wellbeing through 4 key domains:

- **Learning Environment** - The core business of schools is to provide students with a rich learning environment that is open, respectful, caring and safe.
- **Curriculum and Pedagogy** - Quality classroom teaching is recognised as having a profound influence on student learning and wellbeing. Pedagogy that supports student wellbeing is focused on positive relationships and responsiveness to individual needs.
- **Policies and Procedures** - Policies and procedures at both a departmental and school level enable schools to make good decisions that optimise wellbeing and positive behaviour support.
- **Partnerships** - Productive partnerships expand the knowledge, skills and resources available in schools. Schools expand their capacity to support the wellbeing and positive behaviour of students by nurturing partnerships with and between:
 - students
 - teachers
 - parents and carers
 - support staff
 - therapists
 - community groups and agencies

Cairns State Special School implements the following proactive and preventative processes and strategies to support student behaviour:

- notices in the school newsletter, enabling parents to be actively and positively involved in school behaviour expectations
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) team members' regularly provide information to staff, and support to others in sharing successful practices
- individual support profiles are developed for students with high behavioural needs, enabling staff to make the necessary adjustments to support these students consistently across all classroom and non-classroom settings.
- development of specific policies to address:
 - The Use of Personal Technology Devices at School
 - Procedures for Preventing and Responding to Incidents of Bullying

Reinforcing expected school behaviour

At Cairns State Special School, communication of our key messages about behaviour is backed up through reinforcement, which provides students with feedback for engaging in expected school behaviour. This reinforcement system is designed to increase the quantity and quality of positive interactions between students and staff. All staff members are able to give consistent and appropriate acknowledgement and rewards.

Home Group Celebrations

Each home group teacher, prioritises behaviours to be explicitly taught (selected from our whole school priority skills/rules) and organises regular and timely home group celebrations as appropriate.

Cairns State Special School – Gotcha Awards - Stickers

Staff members hand Gotcha Awards (stickers) out each day to students they observe demonstrating school rules/skills in both classroom and non-classroom areas. This acknowledgement and reinforcement occurs continuously throughout the day. When staff 'catch' a student demonstrating school rules/skills, they can choose to give a Gotcha Award (sticker). Gotcha awards/stickers are tallied for each Home Group and weekly points totals contribute towards points for the school Houses (Red, Blue and Yellow). The points accumulate and are announced at Assembly each Friday. Gotcha Awards are entered on One School (positive behaviour) by staff for all students.

Student of the Week Certificates

Staff celebrate students at assembly, presenting Student of the Week certificates to students who demonstrate the **wait, listen, communicate, share** and **safety** whole school priority skills/rules. Students are also celebrated in our school newsletter.

Re-directing low-level and infrequent problem behaviour

When a student exhibits low-level and infrequent problem behaviour, the first response of school staff members is to remind the student of expected school behaviour, then ask them to change their behaviour so that it aligns with our school's expectations.

Our preferred way of re-directing low-level problem behaviour, is the 'closer, quieter' approach to support students to make a choice based on the whole school priority skills/rules. This encourages students to reflect on their own behaviour, evaluate it against expected school behaviour, and plan how their behaviour could be modified to align with the expectations of our school community. This also supports whole school use of common language.

Targeted Support

When students are identified through school based behaviour data as needing additional support outside the realms of general classroom management, this is considered to be targeted behaviour support. In many cases, the challenging behaviours of these students may not be immediately regarded as severe, but the frequency of these behaviours may put these students' learning and social success at risk, if not addressed in a timely manner.

At this level of intervention, support options may include:

- systematic use of consistent visual supports/ social stories etc to outline expectations
- development of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan which clearly outlines:
 - targeted behaviours
 - plan for acknowledging and reinforcing appropriate behaviours
 - proactive support strategies
 - plan for correction of inappropriate behaviours
 - plan for managing critical incidents (if appropriate)
- discussion with Principal / Deputy Principal
- discussion with Professional Learning Teams (consists of teachers in that year level)
- referral to Therapists (where communication and sensory needs impact behaviour)
- assistance with positive behaviour support strategies
- referral for counselling/ support from Guidance Officer (GO)
- support provided through additional resourcing (e.g. teacher aides) for specific programs/outings etc.

Individual Behaviour Support Plans are developed by the home group teacher (usually in conjunction with the student's support team), with input from a range of stakeholders including parents, and other support people as necessary. Plans are evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis (each term and/or if changed circumstances arise). Plans accompanied by appropriate risk assessments are submitted for review and signing by the Deputy Principal/Principal. It is the responsibility of the home group teacher to ensure that everyone who works with the student has a copy of the plan (including relief staff).

Intensive Support

Cairns State Special School is committed to educating all students, including those with the highest behavioural support needs. We recognise that students with highly complex and challenging behaviours need comprehensive systems of support. Intensive Behaviour Support can require both Short Term Management and Crisis Management, both of which fall within the scope of 'Positive Handling'. Additionally, long term management of cases involving intensive behaviour support, will involve explicit teaching of replacement and alternative behaviours.

If an Individual Behaviour Support Plan is implemented and documented as stated in these guidelines, but fails to improve behaviour in an agreed period of time the following actions may be considered:

1. Further referrals with the aim of intensive support and management. Parents will be informed and referrals to external support agencies/ liaison with medical personnel may be undertaken as appropriate
2. Stakeholder meetings involving external supports and agencies (e.g. CYMHS, EVOLVE etc)
3. The plan for support may include involvement in timetabled alternative learning and support programs, intensive training in social skilling and self-management programs, intensive therapeutic support etc.
4. In some extreme cases, documented modifications to student's enrolment and attendance may be considered to enable the student to continue to experience success and positive outcomes during a targeted time in the school environment. An essential element of this plan is the provision of alternative educational activities for the student to participate in during times when education is provided in an off-campus model. It is the responsibility of the home group teacher to provide access to alternative learning experiences and to negotiate with parents/ caregivers how this will be delivered and monitored. Modified Enrolment Plans should be reviewed and modified on a regular basis and must be approved by the principal and with the agreement of parents/carers.

Throughout all phases of support, positive handling will involve risk reduction strategies which include verbal, non-verbal and, where absolutely necessary and as a last resort, physical interventions. As actions taken must always be in the best interests of the students, the focus is on de-escalation by ensuring an environment of security and acceptance, followed by opportunities for recovery and repair.

It is essential that adequate data and information is provided to support intervention approaches.

Data sources include:

- OneSchool reports
- Classroom behaviour data sheets
- Formal observations by Profiler /DP/ other support personnel
- MyHR reports

The first responsibility for data recording is with the home group teacher to ensure a comprehensive and detailed approach to informing behavioural intervention.

Legislative Delegations

Legislation

In this section of the Exemplar State College Student Code of Conduct are links to legislation which influences form and content of Queensland state school discipline procedures.

- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)
- [Criminal Code Act 1899 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Judicial Review Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Right to Information Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(Cwth\)](#)

Delegations

Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, state school principals are responsible for “controlling and regulating student discipline in the school”.

Principals are afforded a number of **non-delegable powers** to assist them to meet this obligation, including the authority to suspend, exclude or cancel the enrolment of a student at the school. These decision-making responsibilities cannot be delegated to other staff in the school, such as deputy principals.

The details of these responsibilities are outlined in the legislative instruments of delegation and instruments of authorisation provided below:

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 Director-General's delegations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 Minister's delegations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 Director-General's authorisations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2006 Minister's delegations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 Director-General's delegations](#)

Disciplinary Consequences

The disciplinary consequences model used at Cairns State Special School follows the same differentiated approach used in the proactive teaching and support of student behavioural expectations.

The majority of students will be confident and capable of meeting established expectations that are clear, explicitly taught and practised. In-class corrective feedback, sanctions and rule reminders may be used by teachers to respond to low-level or minor problem behaviours.

Some students will need additional support, time and opportunities to practise expected behaviours. Approximately 15% of the student population may experience difficulty with meeting the stated expectations, and even with focussed teaching, in-class corrective feedback, sanctions and rule reminders continue to display low-level problem behaviour. A continued pattern of low-level behaviour can interfere with teaching and learning for the whole class, and a decision may be needed by the class teacher to refer the student to the school administration team immediately for determination of a disciplinary consequence.

For a small number of students, approximately 2-5%, a high level of differentiated support or intensive teaching is required to enable them to meet the behavioural expectations. This may be needed throughout the school year on a continuous basis. The determination of the need will be made by the principal in consultation with staff and other relevant stakeholders. On occasion the behaviour of a student may be so serious, such as causing harm to other students or to staff, that the principal may determine that an out of school suspension or exclusion is necessary as a consequence for the student's behaviour. Usually this course of action is only taken when the behaviour is either so serious as to warrant immediate removal of the student for the safety of others, and no other alternative discipline strategy is considered sufficient to deal with the problem behaviour.

The differentiated responses to problem behaviour can be organised into three tiers, with increasing intensity of support and consequences to address behaviour that endangers others or causes major, ongoing interference with class or school operations.

Differentiated

Class teacher provides in-class or in-school disciplinary responses to low-level or minor problem behaviour. This may include:

- Pre-correction (e.g. "Remember, walk quietly to your seat")
- Non-verbal and visual cues (e.g. posters, hand gestures)
- Whole class practising of routines
- Ratio of 5 positive to 1 negative commentary or feedback to class
- Corrective feedback (e.g. "Hand up when you want to ask a question")
- Rule reminders (e.g. "When the bell goes, stay seated until I dismiss you")
- Explicit behavioural instructions (e.g. "Pick up your pencil")
- Proximity control
- Tactical ignoring of inappropriate behaviour (not student)
- Revised seating plan and relocation of student/s

- Individual positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour
- Classwide incentives
- Reminders of incentives or class goals
- Redirection
- Low voice and tone for individual instructions
- Give 'take-up' time for student/s to process instruction/s
- Reduce verbal language
- Break down tasks into smaller chunks
- Provide positive choice of task order (e.g. "Which one do you want to start with?")
- Prompt student to take a break or time away in class
- Model appropriate language, problem solving and verbalise thinking process (e.g. "I'm not sure what is the next step, who can help me?")
- Provide demonstration of expected behaviour
- Peer consequence (e.g. corrective feedback to influential peer demonstrating same problem behaviour)
- Private discussion with student about expected behaviour
- Reprimand for inappropriate behaviour
- Warning of more serious consequences (e.g. removal from classroom)

Focussed

Class teacher is supported by other school-based staff to address in-class problem behaviour. This may include:

- Functional Behaviour Assessment
- Individual student behaviour support strategies (e.g. Student behaviour plan)
- Targeted skills teaching in small group
- Token economy
- Behavioural contract
- Counselling and guidance support
- Self-monitoring plan
- Check in Check Out strategy
- Teacher coaching and debriefing
- Referral to Student Support Network for team based problem solving
- Stakeholder meeting with parents and external agencies

Intensive

School leadership team work in consultation with Student Support Network to address persistent or ongoing serious problem behaviour. This may include:

- Functional Behaviour Assessment based individual support plan
- Complex case management and review
- Stakeholder meeting with parents and external agencies including regional specialists
- Temporary removal of student property (e.g. mobile phone)
- Short term suspension (up to 10 school days)
- Long term suspension (up to 20 school days)
- Charge related suspension (student has been charged with a serious criminal offence is suspended from school until the charge has been dealt with by the relevant justice authorities)

- Suspension pending exclusion (student is suspended from school pending a decision by the Director-General or delegate (principal) about their exclusion from school)
- Exclusion (student is excluded from a particular state school site, a group of state schools or all state schools in Queensland for a defined period of time or permanently)
- Cancellation of enrolment for students older than compulsory school age who refuse to participate in the educational program provided at the school.

School Disciplinary Absences

A School Disciplinary Absence (SDA) is an enforced period of absence from attending a Queensland state school, applied by the Principal as a consequence to address poor student behaviour. There are four types of SDA:

- Short suspension (1 to 10 school days)
- Long suspension (11 to 20 school days)
- Charge-related suspension
- Exclusion (period of not more than one year or permanently).

At Cairns State Special School, the use of any SDA is considered a very serious decision. It is typically only used by the Principal when other options have been exhausted or the student's behaviour is so dangerous that continued attendance at the school is considered a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the school community.

Parents and students may appeal a long suspension, charge-related suspension or exclusion decision. A review will be conducted by the Director-General or their delegate, and a decision made within 40 school days to confirm, amend/vary or set aside the original SDA decision by the Principal.

Re-entry following suspension

Students who are suspended from Cairns State Special School are invited to attend a re-entry meeting on the day of their scheduled return to school. The main purpose of this meeting is to welcome the student, with their parent/s, back to the school. It is **not a time** to review the student's behaviour or the decision to suspend, the student has already received a consequence through their disciplinary absence from school. The aim of the re-entry meeting is for school staff to set the student up for future success and strengthen home-school communication.

We highly recommend the student and their parents attend a re-entry meeting. It may be offered as a support for the student to assist in their successful re-engagement in school following suspension.

Arrangements

The invitation to attend the re-entry meeting will be communicated via telephone and in writing, usually via email. Re-entry meetings are short, taking less than 10 minutes, and kept small with only the Principal or their delegate attending with the student and their parent/s.

A record of the meeting is saved in OneSchool, under the Contact tab, including any notes or discussions occurring during the meeting.

Structure

The structure of the re-entry meeting follows a set agenda. If additional items are raised for discussion, a separate arrangement should be made to meet with the parent/s at a later date and time. This meeting is narrowly focussed on making the student and their family feel welcome back into the school community.

Possible agenda:

- Welcome back to school
- Check in on student wellbeing
- Discuss any recent changes to school routine or staffing
- Offer information about supports available (e.g. guidance officer)
- Set a date for follow-up
- Thank student and parent/s for attending
- Walk with student to classroom

Reasonable adjustments

In planning the re-entry meeting, school staff will consider reasonable adjustments needed to support the attendance and engagement of the student. This includes selecting an appropriate and accessible meeting space, organising translation or interpretation services or supports (e.g. AUSLAN), provision of written and/or pictorial information and other relevant accommodations. The inclusion of support staff, such as guidance officers, may also offer important advice to ensure a successful outcome to the re-entry meeting.

School Policies

Cairns State Special School has tailored school discipline policies designed to ensure students, staff and visitors work cooperatively to create and maintain a supportive and safe learning environment. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the responsibilities for students, staff and visitors outlined in the following policies:

- Temporary removal of student property
- Use of mobile phones and other devices by students
- Preventing and responding to bullying
- Appropriate use of social media

Temporary removal of student property

The removal of any property in a student's possession may be necessary to promote the caring, safe and supportive learning environment of the school, to maintain and foster mutual respect between all state school staff and students. The **Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure** outlines the processes, conditions and responsibilities for state school principals and school staff when temporarily removing student property.

In determining what constitutes a reasonable time to retain student property, the principal or state school staff will consider:

- the condition, nature or value of the property
- the circumstances in which the property was removed
- the safety of the student from whom the property was removed, other students or staff members
- good management, administration and control of the school.

The Principal or state school staff determine when the temporarily removed student property can be returned, unless the property has been handed to the Queensland Police Service.

The following items are explicitly prohibited at Cairns State Special School and will be removed if found in a student's possession:

- illegal items or weapons (e.g. guns, knives*, throwing stars, brass knuckles)
- imitation guns or weapons
- potentially dangerous items (e.g. blades, rope)
- drugs** (including tobacco)
- alcohol
- aerosol deodorants or cans (including spray paint)
- explosives (e.g. fireworks, flares, sparklers)
- flammable solids or liquids (e.g. fire starters, mothballs, lighters)
- poisons (e.g. weed killer, insecticides)
- inappropriate or offensive material (e.g. racist literature, pornography, extremist propaganda).

* No knives of any type are allowed at school. Knives needed for school activities will be provided by the school, and the use of them will be supervised by school staff.

** The administration of medications to students by school staff is only considered when a prescribing health practitioner has determined that it is necessary or when there is no other alternative in relation to the treatment of a specific health need. Schools require medical authorisation to administer any medication to students (**including over-the-counter medications such as paracetamol or alternative medicines**).

Responsibilities

State school staff at Cairns State Special School:

- do not require the student's consent to search school property such as lockers, desks and devices that are supplied to the student through the school;
- may seize a student's bag where there is suspicion that the student has a dangerous item (for example, a knife) in their school bag, prior to seeking consent to search from a parent or calling the police;
- consent from the parent is required to examine or otherwise deal with the temporarily removed student property;
- there may, however, be emergency circumstances where it is necessary to search a student's property without the student's consent or the consent of the student's parents (e.g. to access an EpiPen for an anaphylactic emergency);
- consent from the student or parent is required to search the person of a student (e.g. pockets or shoes). If consent is not provided and a search is considered necessary, the police and the student's parents should be called to make such a determination.

Parents of students at Cairns State Special School

- ensure your children do not bring property onto schools grounds or other settings used by the school (e.g. camp, sporting venues) that:
 - is prohibited according to the Cairns State Special School, Student Code of Conduct
 - is illegal
 - puts the safety or wellbeing of others at risk
 - does not preserve a caring, safe, supportive or productive learning environment
 - does not maintain and foster mutual respect;
- collect temporarily removed student property as soon as possible after they have been notified by the Principal or state school staff that the property is available for collection.

Students of Cairns State Special School

- do not bring property onto school grounds or other settings used by the school (e.g. camp, sporting venues) that:
 - is prohibited according to the Cairns State Special School, Code of Conduct
 - is illegal
 - puts the safety or wellbeing of others at risk
 - does not preserve a caring, safe, supportive or productive learning environment
 - does not maintain and foster mutual respect;
- collect their property as soon as possible when advised by the Principal or state school staff it is available for collection.

Use of mobile phones and other devices by students

Digital literacy refers to the skills needed to live, learn and work in a society where communication and access to information is dominated by digital technologies like mobile phones. However, the benefits brought about through these diverse technologies can be easily overshadowed by misuse which harms others or disrupts learning.

Students are not to bring personal mobile phones to school, including smart watches that have built in phones and/or cameras. The misuse of the camera feature in mobile phones/smart watches poses a risk to the privacy of students and staff. School staff actively support students to make contact with parents when needed via our school landline.

Cairns State Special School does have a parent supported 1:1 iPad Program, where students may bring an iPad from home for use at school for learning. School owned iPads and iPods are available at the school for student use. Students may also bring along high tech communication systems (on devices) however these devices must be only used for communication purposes.

In consultation with the broader school community, Cairns State Special School has determined that explicit teaching of responsible use of devices is a critical component of digital literacy. The knowledge and confidence to navigate and use these technologies safely while developing digital literacy is a responsibility shared between parents, school staff and students.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities for students using devices at school or during school activities, are outlined below.

It is **acceptable** for students at Cairns State Special School to:

- use devices for
 - assigned class work and assignments set by teachers
 - developing appropriate literacy, communication and information skills
 - authoring text, artwork, audio and visual material for publication on the intranet or internet for educational purposes as supervised and approved by the school
 - conducting general research for school activities and projects
 - communicating or collaborating with other students, teachers, parents or experts in relation to school work
 - accessing online references such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, etc.
 - researching and learning through the department's eLearning environment
- be courteous, considerate and respectful of others when using a device

It is **unacceptable** for students at Cairns State Special School to:

- use devices in an unlawful manner
- download, distribute or publish offensive messages or pictures
- use obscene, inflammatory, racist, discriminatory or derogatory language
- use language and/or threats of violence that may amount to bullying and/or harassment, or even stalking
- insult, harass or attack others or use obscene or abusive language

- deliberately waste printing and internet resources
- damage computers, printers or network equipment
- commit plagiarism or violate copyright laws
- ignore teacher directions for the use of social media, online email and internet chat
- send chain letters or spam email (junk mail)
- knowingly download viruses or any other programs capable of breaching the department's network security
- use in-device cameras anywhere a normal camera would be considered inappropriate, such as in change rooms or toilets and without permission from a staff member
- use in-device phones while at school
- invade someone's privacy by taking photos of them or recording personal conversations or daily activities and/or the further distribution (e.g. forwarding, texting, uploading, Bluetooth use etc.) of such material

At all times students, while using ICT facilities and devices supplied by the school, will be required to respond to the requirements of the Cairns State Special School, Student Code of Conduct. In addition, students and their parents should:

- understand the responsibility and behaviour requirements (as outlined by the school) that come with accessing the department's ICT network facilities
- ensure they have the skills to report and discontinue access to harmful information if presented via the internet or email
- be aware that:
 - access to ICT facilities and devices provides valuable learning experiences for students and supports the school's teaching and learning programs
 - the school is not responsible for safeguarding information stored by students on departmentally-owned student computers or mobile devices
 - schools may remotely access departmentally-owned student computers or mobile devices for management purposes
 - students who use a school's ICT facilities and devices in a manner that is not appropriate may be subject to disciplinary action by the school, which could include restricting network access
 - students who take photos, movies or recordings of staff or students without permission, will be required to delete the recordings (staff may support students to complete this task)
 - despite internal departmental controls to manage content on the internet, illegal, dangerous or offensive information may be accessed or accidentally displayed
 - teachers will always exercise their duty of care, but avoiding or reducing access to harmful information also requires responsible use by the student.

Preventing and responding to bullying

Cairns State Special School uses the [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#) to promote positive relationships and the wellbeing of all students, staff and visitors at the school.

Our staff know student learning is optimised when they feel connected to others and experience safe and trusting relationships. Students who feel secure are more likely to be active participants in their learning and to achieve better physical, emotional, social and educational outcomes. Teachers who feel valued and supported are more likely to engage positively with students and build stronger connections within the school community. Parents who are positively engaged with their child's education leads to improved student self-esteem, attendance and behaviour at school. Enhancing the wellbeing of students and their educators delivers overall long-term social, health and economic benefits to the Australian community.

Bullying

The agreed national definition for Australian schools describes bullying as

- 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;
- involving an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening;
- happening 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);
- having 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.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

At Cairns State Special School our staff will work to quickly respond to any matters raised of this nature in collaboration with students and parents.

Student Intervention and Support Services

Cairns State Special School recognises the need to provide intervention and support to all students involved in incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying.

Students who have been subject or witness to bullying have access to a range of internal support staff, as identified in the Student Support Network section earlier in this document. Students are, however, also encouraged to approach any staff member with whom they feel comfortable sharing their concerns, regardless of their role in the school. All staff at Cairns State Special School are familiar with the response expectations to reports of bullying, and will act quickly to ensure students' concerns are addressed. A formal plan of action may be developed and documented to support the implementation of strategies to assist the student.

Students who engage in bullying behaviours towards others will also be provided with support to assist them to use more socially acceptable and appropriate behaviours in their interactions. This includes counselling, social development programs, referral to mental health services or involvement in a restorative justice strategy. School disciplinary measures may also be used to reinforce the seriousness with which the community takes all incidents of bullying. These measures may include internal school suspension, withdrawal from social events or celebrations or more severe punishments such as suspension or exclusion from school.

Appropriate use of social media

The internet, mobile phones and social media provide wonderful opportunities for students to network and socialise online. While these technologies provide positive platforms for sharing ideas, they also have the potential to cause pain and suffering to individuals, groups or even whole communities.

It's important to remember that sometimes negative comments posted about the school community have a greater impact than expected. This guide offers some information about how to use social media in relation to comments or posts about the school community. Reputations of students, teachers, schools, principals and even parents can be permanently damaged — and in some cases, serious instances of inappropriate online behaviour are dealt with by police and the court system.

Being aware of a few simple strategies can help keep the use of social media positive and constructive:

- Before you post something online, ask yourself if the community or individual really need to know. Is it relevant, positive and helpful?
- Remember that what you post online is a direct reflection of who you are. People will potentially form lasting opinions of you based on what you post online.
- Be a good role model. If things get heated online consider logging out and taking a few moments to relax and think. Hasty, emotive responses could inflame situations unnecessarily.
- Be mindful when commenting, try to keep general and avoid posting anything that could identify individuals.
- A few years ago parents may have discussed concerns or issues with their friends at the school gate. Today with the use of social media, online discussions between you and your close friends can very quickly be shared with a much wider audience, potentially far larger than intended.
- Taking a few moments to think about the content you are about to post could save upset, embarrassment, and possible legal action.
- As a parent you have a role in supervising and regulating your child's online activities at home and its impact on the reputation and privacy of others. Parents are their child's first teachers — so they will learn online behaviours from you.

Is it appropriate to comment or post about schools, staff or students?

Parental and community feedback is important for schools and the department. If you have a compliment, complaint or enquiry about an issue at school, the best approach is to speak directly to the school about the matter, rather than discussing it in a public forum.

While many schools use social media to update parents of school notices, the department prefers that parents contact schools directly with a compliment, complaint or enquiry due to privacy considerations.

If you have raised an issue with a school or know that another person has, consider refraining from discussing those details on social media, particularly the names of anyone involved.

Keep comments calm and polite, just as you would over the telephone or by email. If you encounter negative or derogatory content online which involves the school, hinders a child's learning and/or affects the school community at large, contact the school principal.

Possible civil or criminal ramifications of online commentary

A serious instance of inappropriate online behaviour may constitute a criminal offence and become a police matter. For example, online content may substantiate the offence of 'using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence' (Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) s. 474.17). School staff may contact their union or obtain personal legal advice if they feel that online content seriously impacts their reputation. Defamatory online content may give rise to litigation under the Defamation Act 2005 (Qld).

What about other people's privacy?

If you upload photos of your children, be mindful of who might be in the background. You might be happy to share your child's successes with your friends and family via social media, but some parents are not. If you are tagging or naming students, consider that other parents may not want their child's name attached to images online.

What if I encounter problem content?

Taking the following steps may help resolve the issue in a constructive way:

- refrain from responding
- take a screen capture or print a copy of the concerning online content
- if you consider problem content to be explicit, pornographic or exploitative of minors, you should keep a record of the URL of the page containing that content but NOT print or share it. The URL can be provided to the school principal, or police, as needed for escalation of serious concerns
- block the offending user
- report the content to the social media provider.

Restrictive Practices

School staff at Cairns State Special School need to respond to student behaviour that presents a risk of physical harm to the student themselves or others. It is anticipated that most instances of hazardous behaviour can be de-escalated and resolved quickly. On some rarer occasions, a student's behaviour may continue to escalate and staff need to engage immediately with positive and proactive strategies aimed at supporting the student to manage their emotional arousal and behaviour.

In some very rare situations, where there is immediate risk of physical harm to the student or other people, and when all other alternative strategies have failed to reduce the risk, it may be necessary for staff to use restrictive practices.

The use of restrictive practices will always be as a last resort, when there is no other available option for reducing immediate risk to the student, staff or other people. Restrictive practices are not used for punishment or as a disciplinary measure.

The department's **Restrictive practices procedure** is written with consideration for the protection of everyone's human rights, health, safety and welfare. There are six fundamental principles:

1. Regard to the human rights of those students
2. Safeguards students, staff and others from harm
3. Ensures transparency and accountability
4. Places importance on communication and consultation with parents and carers
5. Maximises the opportunity for positive outcomes, and
6. Aims to reduce or eliminate the use of restrictive practices.

Very rarely restrictive practices will be planned and staff will employ, when necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods (of physical restraint/ mechanical restraint/ clinical holding) which are based upon behaviour risk assessment or clinical health need and are recorded in advance. The use of planned strategies will only be where there is foreseeable immediate risk consistent with the **Restrictive practices procedure**.

Seclusion will not be used as a planned response and will only be used in serious circumstances for managing an unforeseeable situation in an emergency. It will be used for the shortest time possible and in a safe area that presents no additional foreseeable risk to the student. In such emergencies, a staff member will observe the student at all times and seclusion will cease as soon as possible.

Following the use of any restrictive practice, a focused review will help staff to understand how they responded to the risk in any incident that involved the use of a restrictive practice. Staff will consider whether there are other options for managing a similar situation in the future. This strategy works well for reducing the use of restrictive practices.

All incidents of restrictive practices will be recorded and reported in line with departmental procedures.

Critical Incidents

It is important that all school staff have a consistent understanding of how to respond in emergencies involving student behaviour that seriously endangers the student or others. This consistency ensures that appropriate actions are taken to ensure that both students and staff are kept safe.

A critical incident is defined as an occurrence that is sudden, urgent, and usually unexpected, or an occasion requiring immediate action (e.g. in the community, on the road). The aim in these situations is to bring the behaviour of the student under rapid and safe control. It is not a time to try and to punish or discipline the student; it is a crisis management period only.

Staff should follow the documented plan for any student involved in regular critical incidents, which should be saved and available for staff to review in OneSchool.

For unexpected critical incidents, staff should use basic defusing techniques:

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

Related Procedures and Guidelines

These are related procedures or guidelines which school staff use to inform decisions and actions around matters associated with students wellbeing, behaviour and learning.

- Cancellation of enrolment
- Complex case management
- Customer complaints management policy and procedure
- Disclosing personal information to law enforcement agencies
- Enrolment in state primary, secondary and special schools
- Hostile people on school premises, wilful disturbance and trespass
- Inclusive education
- Police and Child Safety Officer interviews and searches with students
- Restrictive practices
- Refusal to enrol – Risk to safety or wellbeing
- Student discipline
- Student dress code
- Student protection
- Supporting students' mental health and wellbeing
- Temporary removal of student property by school staff
- Use of ICT systems
- Using mobile devices

Resources

- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)
- [Behaviour Foundations professional development package](#) (school employees only)
- [Bullying. No Way!](#)
- [eheadspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Parent and community engagement framework](#)
- [Parentline](#)
- [Queensland Department of Education School Discipline](#)
- [Raising Children Network](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)

Conclusion

Cairns State Special School staff are committed to ensuring every student is supported to feel safe, welcome and valued in our school. There may, however, be occasions where parents need to raise a concern or make a complaint about an issue you feel is adversely affecting their child's education.

All Queensland state schools are committed to ensuring that all complaints - whether they relate to a school staff member or a school's operations - are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. As a parent or carer, you can express dissatisfaction with the service or action of the Department of Education or its staff, including decisions made or actions taken in a school and/or by the local regional office.

As a complainant, it is your responsibility to:

- give us a clear idea of the issue or concern and your desired solution
- provide all the relevant information when making the complaint
- understand that addressing a complaint can take time
- cooperate respectfully and understand that unreasonable, abusive, or disrespectful conduct will not be tolerated
- let us know if something changes, including if help is no longer needed.

The Department of Education may not proceed with your complaint if your conduct is unreasonable.

In most instances, staff members are told of complaints made about them and offered the right of reply. A complainant also has the right to have a support person throughout the process.

The following three-step approach assists parents and school staff in reaching an outcome that is in the best interests of the student:

1. **Early resolution:** discuss your complaint with the school
The best place to raise any concerns is at the point where the problem or issue arose. You can make an appointment at the school to discuss your complaint with your child's teacher or the principal. You are also welcome to lodge your complaint in writing or over the phone. You can also make a complaint through [QGov](#).

Complaints may be lodged by telephone, writing or in electronic format. Email addresses can be accessed through the [schools directory](#).
2. **Internal review:** [contact the local Regional Office](#)
If, after taking the early resolution step, you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or how the complaint was handled, you can ask the local [regional office](#) to conduct a review. You need to submit a [Request for internal review form](#) within 28 days of receiving the complaint outcome.
3. **External review:** contact a review authority
if you are dissatisfied after the internal review, you may wish to contact a review authority, such as the Queensland Ombudsman, and request an independent,

external review. More information about external review options is available at www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au.

Some matters need to be handled in a different way to school matters and will be referred to other areas in the department. These include:

- issues about harm, or risk of harm, to a student attending a state school, which must be managed in accordance with the [Student protection procedure](#).
- complaints about corrupt conduct, public interest disclosures; or certain decisions made under legislation, which will be dealt with as outlined in the [Excluded complaints factsheet](#).