



***“Nothing But The Best”***

# **Student Code of Conduct 2021 - 2024**

## ***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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## Purpose

Toowoomba North State School (TNSS) 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 for Students 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 and the wider community.

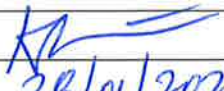

The Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct for Students details, and subsequently guides, our school practice. It should be read in conjunction with our *Pedagogical Framework* and *Learning and Well-Being Framework*.

## Contact Information

### Toowoomba North State School

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Phone:	(07) 46178333
Email:	principal@toowoombanorthss.eq.edu.au
School website address:	<a href="https://toowoombanorthss.eq.edu.au">https://toowoombanorthss.eq.edu.au</a>
Contact Person:	Dianne White, Sharyn Clark

## Endorsement

Principal Name:	Kaarin Littleton
Principal Signature:	
Date:	28/01/2021
P&C President Name:	Dianne White
P&C President Signature:	
Date:	28-01-2021

## Principal's Foreword

Welcome to Toowoomba North State School. I hope that your time here will be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. I look forward to the contribution you will be making to our school.

This resource has been produced to help you settle quickly into the daily rhythm of our school. It may take time for you to familiarise yourself with all the routines of our school, so please feel comfortable to come and see me for assistance.

You will find the staff a very friendly team who are totally committed to achieving the best educational outcomes and highest level of independence possible for all our students.

Kaarin Littleton

## P&C Statement of Support

As president of the Toowoomba North State School P&C Committee, I am proud to support the new Student Code of Conduct. The inclusive, transparent consultation process led by Mrs Kaarin Littleton and her team has ensured that all parents have had multiple opportunities to contribute and provide feedback on the final product. This has been an important aspect in the development of the Toowoomba North State School Code of Conduct, as the awareness and involvement of parents is critical to ensuring all adults are able to support the students of the school to meet the set expectations.

Any parents who wish to discuss the Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct and the role of families in supporting the behavioural expectations of students, are welcome to contact myself or to join the Toowoomba North State School P&C Association. It is with your support that we can work collaboratively with school staff to ensure all students are safe and appropriately supported to meet their individual social and learning needs.

Dianne White

## School Captains Statement

On behalf of the student body at Toowoomba North State School, we endorse the Student Code of Conduct for 2021. We have represented students on the consultation committee, provided feedback on draft materials and put forward the views of young people on a range of issues affecting their lives at school. Throughout the year, we will continue to work with the school administration team and the TNSS P&C Association on how the Student Code of Conduct is working. Identify areas for improvement and present alternative options or suggestions for consideration.

Any student who has questions or issues they would like raised, please see us, the School Captains and we will raise the topic with the PBL Team.

School Captain Name: Lily Dryden

School Captain Name: Fula Byamungu

## Consultation

The consultation process used to inform the development of the Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct occurred in three phases.

**In the first phase**, we held internal meetings with staff. During these meeting, we examined a range of data sets on student attendance, school disciplinary absences and outcomes from the most recent School Opinion Survey. We distributed a draft plan to staff for the purpose of feedback to identify strengths and areas for further development.

**In the second phase**, we provided the revised draft to all students and parents/carers based on staff feedback. This included a request to respond to key themes from the earlier staff discussions about strengths and areas for further development.

**In the third and final phase**, a draft Student Code of Conduct was prepared and distributed for comment to all members of the school community. The finished version, incorporating suggested changes and feedback, was sent to the P&C Executives in November 2020 for endorsement. The P&C Executives unanimously endorsed the Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct for implementation in 2021.

A communication strategy has been developed to support the implementation of the Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct, including parent information evenings, promotion through the school website, weekly newsletter and email footer links of staff emails. The Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct has also been translated into a simplified English version and is available in Kurdish. Any families who require assistance to access a copy of the Toowoomba North State School Student Code of Conduct, including translation to a suitable language, are encouraged to contact the principal.

### **Review Statement**

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



## Learning and Behaviour Statement

Everyone brings their own sets of personal beliefs to a school community. These beliefs influence their decisions, behaviour and social practices. It is reasonable to expect that not everyone will share the same sets of beliefs, and this contributes to a richly diverse social environment in each school. It can also contribute to differences in expectations and force us to reflect on our own understanding of what we consider acceptable and unacceptable. We encourage any student or parent to make an appointment with the principal to discuss the model of behaviour support and discipline used at this school.

### PBL Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Toowoomba North State School uses Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) 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><b>All students</b> (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"><li>▪ teaching behaviours in the setting they will be used</li><li>▪ being consistent when addressing challenging behaviour, while taking developmental norms and behavioural function into account</li><li>▪ providing refresher lessons and targeted recognition throughout the school year so skills are ready and likely to be used when students need them</li><li>▪ asking students and their families for their perspectives on school climate, instruction, reinforcement, and discipline so improvements in Tier 1 may be made.</li></ul>
2	<p>Targeted instruction and supports for <b>some students</b> (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 according to the needs of each school's student body, but all have certain things in common:</p>



- there is a clear connection between the skills taught in the interventions and the school-wide expectations.
- interventions require 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/s).

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.

- 3** 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.

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 by conducting a Functional Behaviour Assessment ( FBA) and should include strategies to:

- 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.

If the school data indicates that more than 2-5% of the student population requires individualised services, a review of Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports and organisation is recommended.

## **Consideration of Individual Circumstances**

Staff at Toowoomba North State 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, so while we understand the interest of other students, staff and parents to know what punishment another student might have received, we will not disclose or discuss this information with anyone but the student's family. This applies even if the behavioural incident, such as bullying, involves your child. You can be assured that 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.

If you have concerns about the behaviour of another student at the school, or the way our staff have responded to their behaviour, please make an appointment with the principal to discuss the matter.

## **Student Wellbeing**

Student wellbeing is important at TNSS. Our PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) framework is student centred and provides a positive learning environment in which each individual is empowered to be safe, be respectful and be a learner leading students to quality behaviour and academic success. The [Responsible Behaviour Plan](#) includes many strategies to promote the wellbeing of students including [Zones of Regulation](#), the high 5 problem solving technique and using [the Safe Room](#) to help students self-regulate. A behaviour teacher aide regularly checks in on students daily to maintain connections and assist students who need extra support in classrooms and in the playground.

Many staff are committed to developing the health and wellbeing of North students. A Student Support Officer is employed twice a week to check in on and work with students and classes and offer support when needed. A Guidance Officer is engaged once a week and works with cognitive and wellbeing supports for students. Cultural awareness and cultural educational programs are also run in the school.

A whole school wellbeing initiative at North is Friday Afternoon Activities. Students choose an activity offered by staff and they have a free choice to play and learn with all students of different ages and year levels. This promotes interactivity at a whole school scale, co-operation, sports skills and the overall happiness and wellbeing of our students.

### **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*

Toowoomba North State 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*

Toowoomba North State 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.

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

### *Mental health*

Toowoomba North State 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*

Toowoomba North State School staff who notice suicide warning signs in a student should seek help immediately from the school guidance officer, senior guidance officer or other appropriate staff.

When dealing with a mental health crisis, schools call 000 when there is an imminent threat to the safety of student in the first instance, and where necessary provide first aid. In all other situations, Toowoomba North State 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, Toowoomba North State 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, Toowoomba North State School staff immediately enact the School Emergency Management 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**

Toowoomba North State School is proud to have a Student Support Network in place to help the social, emotional and physical wellbeing of every student. In addition to the assistance provided by class teachers, we have a team whose dedicated roles are to help ensure our school is an inclusive, nurturing environment.

Students can approach any trusted school staff member at Toowoomba North State School to seek assistance or advice. If they are unable to assist they will provide guidance and help ensure the student is connected to the appropriate representative of the Student Support Network.

Parents who would like more information about the student support roles and responsibilities are invited to contact the principal on the school phone number.

<b>Role</b>	<b>What they do</b>
Guidance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ provides a comprehensive student support program within the school environment offering counselling with students on a one-on-one basis or in a group setting</li> <li>▪ assists students with specific difficulties, acting as a mediator or providing information on other life skills</li> <li>▪ liaises with parents, teachers, or other external health providers as needed as part of the counselling process.</li> </ul>
Student Support Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ provides individual and, at times, group support to students to assist their engagement with education and training</li> <li>▪ support students to overcome barriers to education such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ classroom support</li> <li>○ relationships/social skills</li> <li>○ social/emotional/physical wellbeing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Positive Behaviour for Learning Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Behaviour strategies for teachers/students</li> <li>▪ Behaviour resources for classroom</li> <li>▪ Safe Room</li> <li>▪ Sensory Room</li> </ul>

It is also important for students and parents to understand there are regional and statewide support services also available to supplement the school network. These include Principal Advisor Student Protection, Mental Health Coach, Autism Coach, Inclusion Coach, Success Coach, Advisory Visiting Teachers and Senior Guidance Officers. For more information about these services and their roles, please speak with the principal on the school phone number.

## Whole School Approach to Discipline

Toowoomba North State 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 Toowoomba North State School we believe discipline is about more than punishment. It is a word that reflects our belief that student behaviour 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 Toowoomba North State 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 class teacher or make an appointment to meet with the principal.

## School beliefs about behaviour and learning

Toowoomba North State School aims to provide a positive and supportive learning environment which caters for the varying educational and behavioural needs of the school community.

In order to achieve this the school's overall strategy is based upon the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) approach.

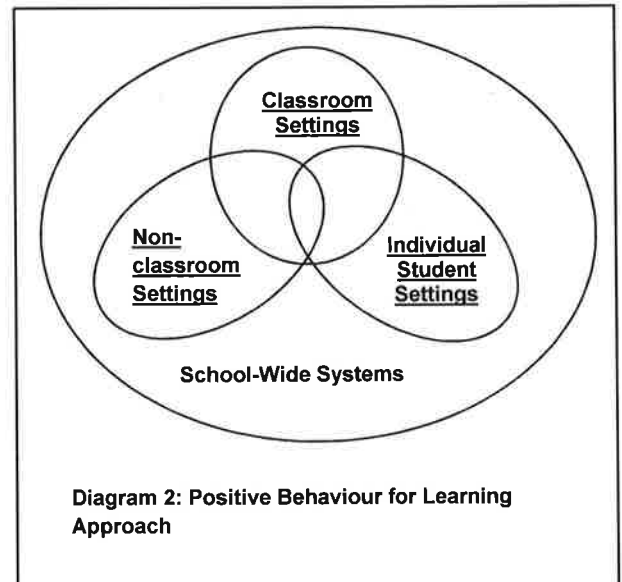
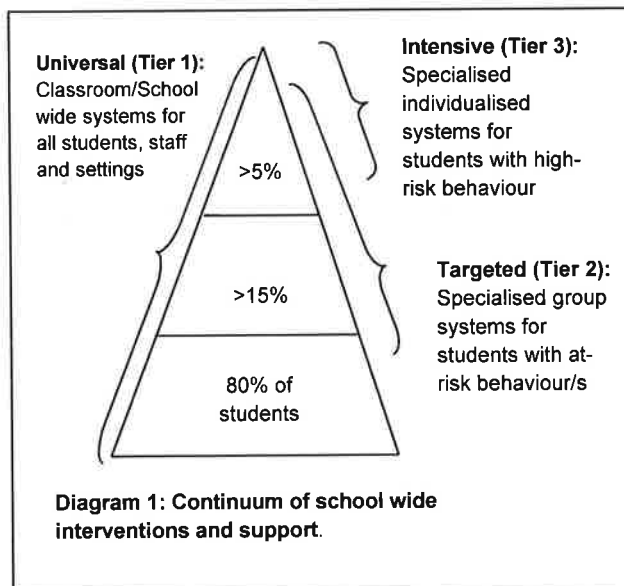
The PBL approach is reflected in the following perspectives:

1. It is a whole school values based approach
2. It is a systems based way of influencing student's behaviours through effective teaching practices
3. It is based on school wide performance indicators

Whole of School Approach:

Our approach to discipline and behaviour at Toowoomba North State School is a whole of school strategy in two senses:

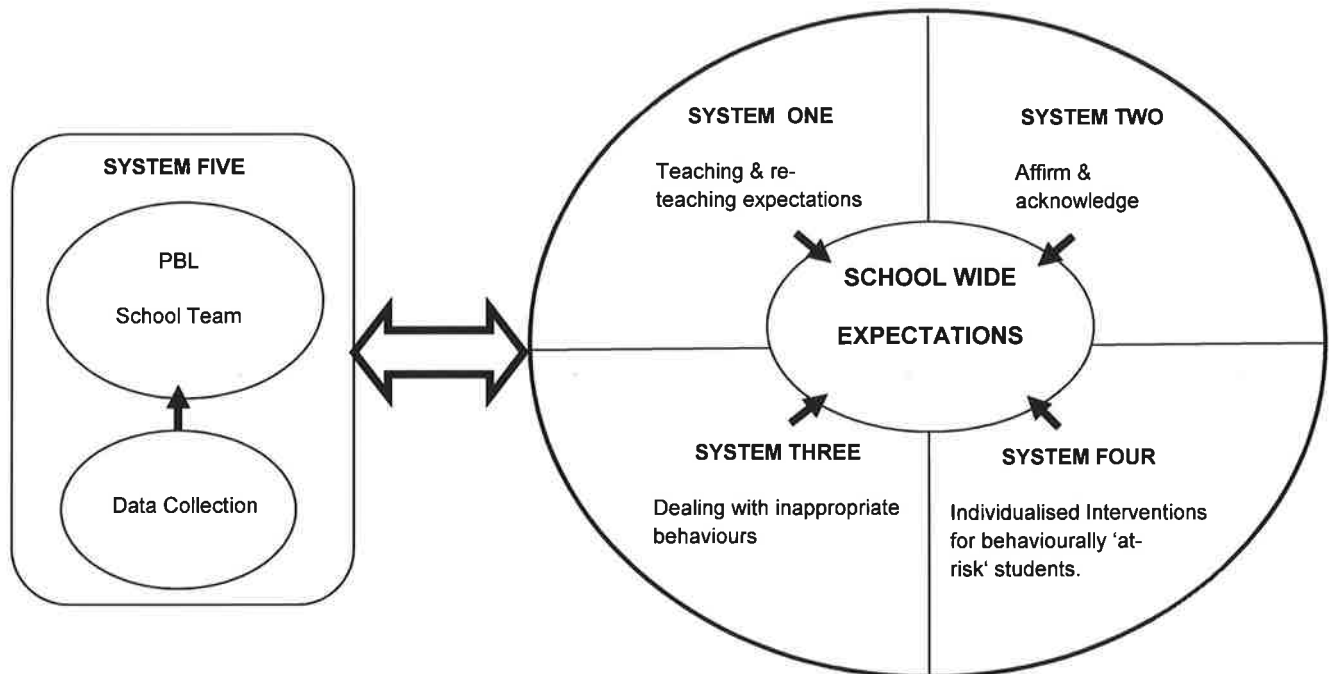
- We provide a continuum of support for all students (see Diagram 1 below);
- We have procedures that operate across all sectors of the school (see Diagram 2 below).



## Systems Based Model

Our strategy is grounded in the belief that the practices and behaviours of teachers and other adult staff at the school can, and do, influence student behaviours. The systems that constitute our strategy aim towards ensuring that staff practices include a range of approaches and are deliberately chosen in response to data based interpretations about what the behaviours of students in the school really are.

There are five systems as illustrated on the diagram below.





## **PBL School Team – Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Roles**

- To manage the collection of data in the school via the PBL data base and other relevant sources
- To collate reports on the trends and patterns of those behaviours;
- To determine the focus of the whole school teaching program;
- To make recommendations for actions to be taken to respond to the patterns and trends in behaviour observed;
- To identify individual students whose behaviour puts them “at risk” and in need of intervention strategies; and
- To bring these students to the attention of the relevant persons and/or groups in the school so that individualised interventions can be made.

### **Responsibilities and Operating Procedures**

- Meet frequently (fortnightly)
- Collation of data and reports on whole school behaviours
- Recommendations of actions in response to behavioural patterns
- Identification of students at risk
- Implementation of referral process
- Overview of the PBL data base

## **Performance Indicators**

We will know that we are implementing the PBL strategy effectively when all, or most, of the following features are observable in various settings across the school:

### **i) Across the Whole School Setting**

- >80% of students can tell you the Values of the school and, using verbal prompts and statements give behavioural example/s because they have been taught, practiced and acknowledged
- Positive adult-to-student interactions exceed the negative interactions
- Behavioural support is based on a sound functional analysis of the problem behaviours
- Data and team-based action planning and implementation are operating
- Administrators are active participants
- Full continuum of behaviour support is available to all students

### **ii) In Classroom Settings**

- Classroom-wide positive expectations are taught and encouraged
- Classroom routines and cues are taught and encouraged
- Ratio of four positive to one negative adult-student interactions
- Active supervision
- Redirections for minor, infrequent behaviour errors
- Frequent pre-corrections for chronic errors
- Appropriate curriculum choices and effective academic instruction

iii) In Non-Classroom Settings

- Positive rules, expectations and routines are taught and encouraged
- Active supervision by all staff
- Scan, move and interact
- Pre-corrections and reminders
- Positive reinforcement

iv) In Individual Student Settings

- Behavioural competence at school and district levels
- Function-based behaviour support planning
- Team and data-based decision making
- Targeted social skills and self-management instruction
- Individualized instructional and curricular accommodations

## Staff and Parents

The table below explains the PBL expectations for parents when visiting our school and the standards we commit to as staff.

### Safe

<b><i>What we expect to see from you</i></b>	<b><i>What you can expect from us</i></b>
You leave and collect your child from the designated area at school.	We will give clear guidance about a designated area for parents to leave and collect students.
You notice when others need help, parents, staff and students, and ask if there is anything you can do to assist.	We will check in with you about your child's needs or any support your family may require.

### Respectful

<b><i>What we expect to see from you</i></b>	<b><i>What you can expect from us</i></b>
You respect the obligation of staff to maintain student and family privacy.	We will maintain confidentiality about information relating to your child and family.
You recognise people are different and will be non-judgemental, fair and equitable to others in the school community.	We will welcome and celebrate a diverse school community with recognition of significant social, cultural and historical events.
You are respectful in your conversations at home about school staff.	We will ensure positive behaviours are role modelled for all students.
You make an appointment to speak with the class teacher or principal to discuss any matters relating to your child.	We will respond as soon as practicable to your request for an appointment and negotiate a mutually agreeable date and time with you.
You approach the class teacher or principal if you are concerned about the behaviour of a staff member, another student or parent.	We will work with every family to quickly address any complaints or concerns about the behaviour of staff, students or other parents.
You take a positive, solution-focused approach to resolving complaints.	We will nominate a contact person for you to work with to resolve a school related complaint.
You respect school, student and staff privacy in your online communications.	We will act quickly to address social media issues that affect staff, students or families.
You seek out opportunities to provide positive feedback to the classroom teacher about their work with the class, a student or colleagues.	We will work closely with families to accommodate their personal needs, including work commitments, finances and family structure.

## Learner

<i><b>What we expect to see from you</b></i>	<i><b>What you can expect from us</b></i>
You support your child to meet the learning and behavioural expectations at school.	We are clear about our learning and behavioural expectations, and contact you to provide regular feedback about your child's progress.
You stay informed about school news and activities by reading the school newsletter, Facebook, website, the school's text service and other materials sent home by school staff.	We will use the electronic school newsletter as the primary means of notifying parents about school news, excursions or events.
You ensure your children attend school every day and notify the school promptly of any absences or changes in contact details.	We will create a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for every student.
You share relevant information about your child's learning, social and behavioural needs with school staff.	We will share relevant information with you about your child's learning, social and behavioural progress at school.
You help your child to see the strengths and benefits in diversity and difference in their classmates.	We will promote every child's individuality and build a cohesive, inclusive classroom and school culture.

## Differentiated and Explicit Teaching (Tier 1)

Toowoomba North State School is a disciplined school environment that provides differentiated teaching to respond to the learning needs of all students. This involves teaching expected behaviours and providing opportunities for students to practise these behaviours. Teachers reinforce expected behaviours, provide feedback and correction, and opportunities for practise.

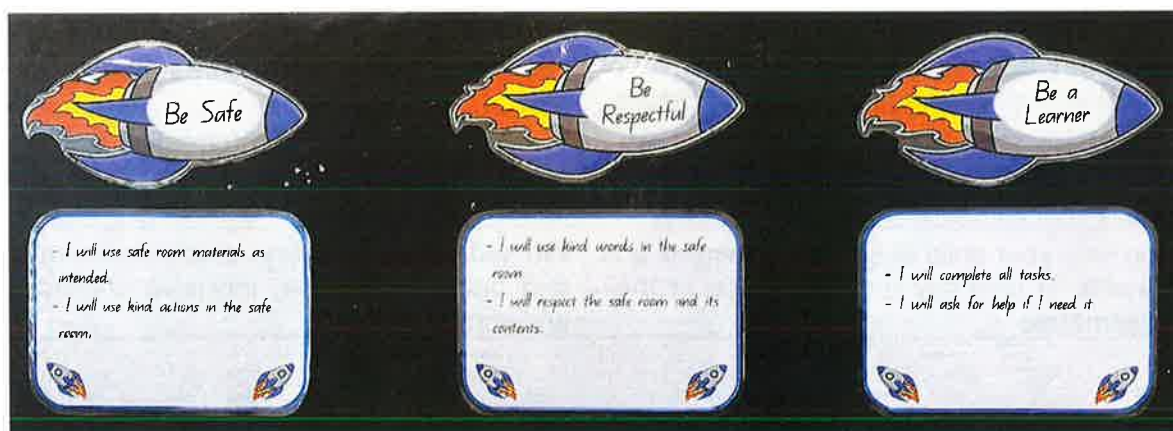
Teachers at Toowoomba North State School vary what students are taught, how they are taught and how students can demonstrate what they know as part of this differentiated approach to behaviour. These decisions about differentiation are made in response to data and day-to-day monitoring that indicates the behavioural learning needs of students. This enables our teachers to purposefully plan a variety of ways to engage students; assist them to achieve the expected learning; and to demonstrate their learning.

There are three main layers to differentiation, as illustrated in the diagram below. This model is the same used for academic and pedagogical differentiation.



These three layers map directly to the tiered approach discussed earlier in the Learning and Behaviour section. For example, in the PBL framework, Tier 1 is differentiated and explicit teaching for all students, Tier 2 is focused teaching for identified students and Tier 3 is intensive teaching for a small number of students. Each layer provides progressively more personalised supports for students.

Every classroom in our school uses the PBL values: be safe, be respectful and be a learner, for developing their classroom expectations. Using the expectations, the class teacher works with all students to develop exactly what each of the expectations look, sound and feel like in their classroom. The agreed expectations are on display in every classroom, used as the basis of teaching expectations daily and throughout the year and are revisited regularly to address any new or emerging issues.



## Focused Teaching (Tier 2)

Approximately 15% of all students in any school or classroom may require additional support to meet behaviour expectations, even after being provided with differentiated and explicit teaching. These students may have difficulty meeting behavioural expectations in a particular period of the day or as part of a learning area/subject, and focused teaching is provided to help them achieve success.

Focused teaching involves revisiting key behavioural concepts and/or skills and using explicit and structured teaching strategies in particular aspects of a behaviour skill. Focused teaching provides students with more opportunities to practise skills and multiple opportunities to achieve the intended learning and expected behaviour.

Support staff, including teachers with specialised expertise in behaviour management, work collaboratively with class teachers at Toowoomba North State School to provide focused teaching. Focused teaching is aligned to the PBL Matrix, and student progress is monitored by the classroom teacher/s to identify those who:

- no longer require the additional support
- require ongoing focused teaching
- require intensive teaching.

## Intensive Teaching (Tier 3)

Research evidence shows that even in an effective, well-functioning school there will always be approximately 5% of the student population who require intensive teaching to achieve behavioural expectations. Intensive teaching involves frequent and explicit instruction, with

individuals or in small groups, to develop mastery of basic behavioural concepts, skills and knowledge.

Some students may require intensive teaching for a short period, for particular behaviour skills. Other students may require intensive teaching for a more prolonged period. Decisions about the approach will be made based on data collected from their teacher or teachers, and following consultation with the student's family.

For a small number of students who continue to display behaviours that are deemed complex and challenging, then individualised, function-based behaviour assessment and support plans and multi-agency collaboration may be provided to support the student. This approach will seek to address the acute impact of barriers to learning and participation faced by students who are negotiating a number of complex personal issues.

Students who require intensive teaching will be assigned an individual mentor at the school that will oversee the coordination of their program, communicate with stakeholders and directly consult with the student.

# Legislative Delegations

## Legislation

In this section of the Student Code of Conduct provide links to relevant legislation that inform the overall Student discipline procedure.

- [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 Toowoomba North State 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 focused 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 (Tier 1)**

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 4 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 30 second '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 Safe Room
- 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
- Warning of more serious consequences (e.g. Buddy Class)

### **Focused (Tier 2)**

Class teacher is supported by Tier 2 team to address in-class problem behaviour. This may include:

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

### **Intensive (Tier 3)**

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. Under the EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) ACT 2006 - SECT 282, each of the following is a ground for suspension —

- (a) disobedience;
  - (b) misbehaviour;
  - (c) conduct that adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect, other students;
  - (d) conduct that adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect, the good order and management of the school;
  - (e) the student's attendance at the school poses an unacceptable risk to the safety or wellbeing of other students or of staff;
  - (f) the student is charged with a serious offence.
- (2) It is also a ground for suspension if—
- (a) the student is charged with an offence other than a serious offence; and
  - (b) the principal is reasonably satisfied it would not be in the best interests of other students or of staff for the student to attend the school while the charge is pending.
- (3) To remove any doubt, it is declared that, for *subsection (1) (c) or (d)*, conduct may be a ground for suspension even if the conduct does not happen on school premises or during school hours.
- (4) Each of the grounds under *subsection (1) (f) or (2)* is a **"charge-related ground"**.

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 Toowoomba North State 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.

The appeal process is a thorough review of all documentation associated with the SDA decision and provides an opportunity for both the school and the family to present their case in the matter. Time is afforded for collection, dissemination and response to the materials by both the school and the family. It is important that the purpose of the appeal is understood so that expectations are clear, and appropriate supports are in place to ensure students can continue to access their education while completing their SDA.

### Re-entry following suspension

Students who are suspended from Toowoomba North State School may be 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 punishment 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.

It is not mandatory for the student or their parents to 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 should follow a set agenda, shared in advance with the student and their family. 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 should be narrowly focused 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 or Community Education Counsellors, may also offer important advice to ensure a successful outcome to the re-entry meeting.

### **Exclusion by Principals**

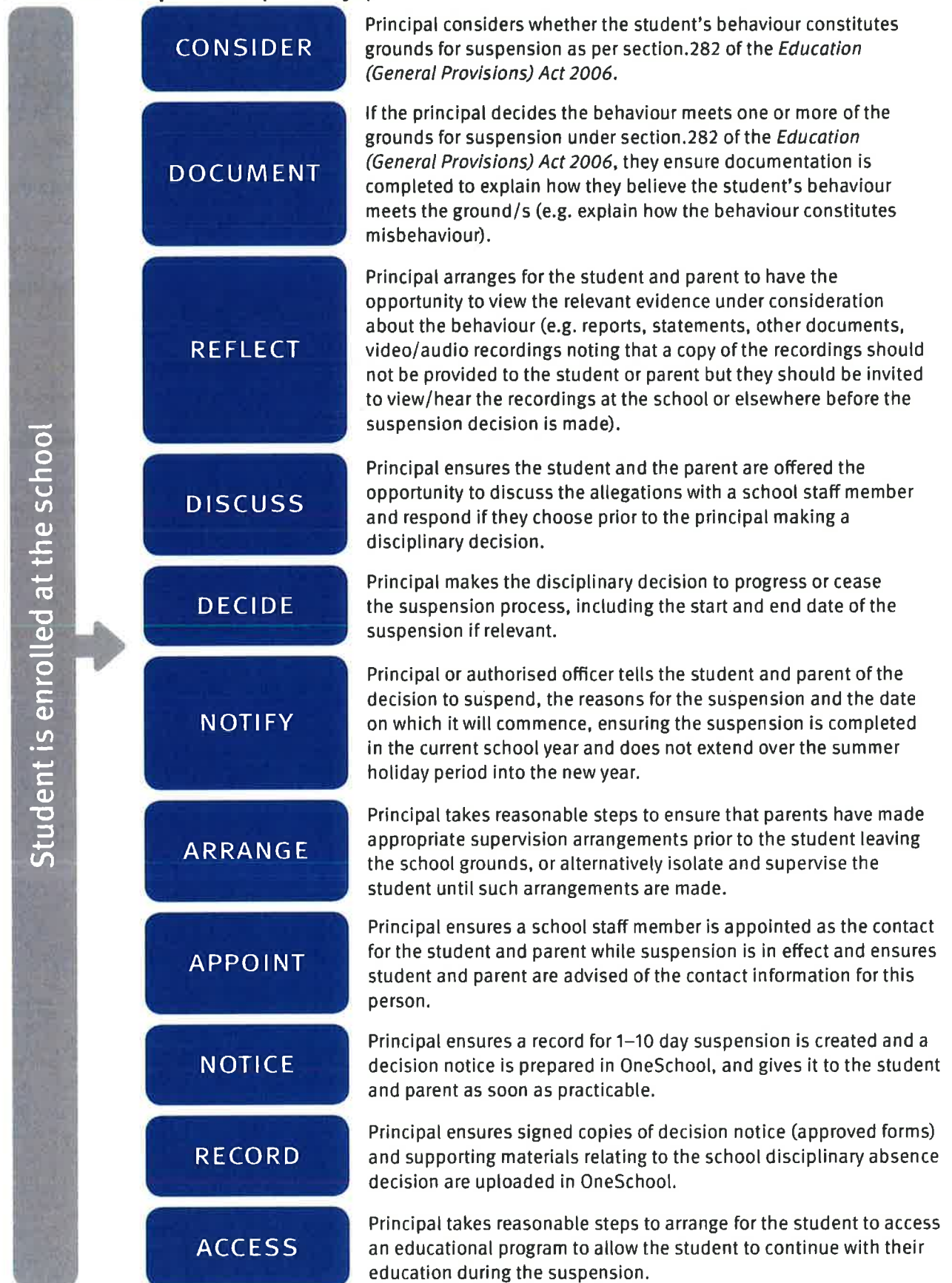
- are the only persons authorised under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld) to make a disciplinary decision about the use of exclusion
- consider exclusion only as a **last resort**, including if suspension is demonstrably inadequate to deal with the student's disobedience, misbehaviour, conduct or risk (e.g. student has sold a large quantity of illicit drugs, seriously assaulted a staff member)
- in contemplating disciplinary consequences, consider whether the suspension of the student under division 2 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld) is inadequate to deal with the disobedience, misbehaviour, conduct or risk, and if so, whether the student's behaviour constitutes one or more of the following grounds under section.292 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld):
  - persistent disobedience

- misbehaviour
- conduct that adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect, other students (may be ground for exclusion even if the conduct does not happen on school premises or during school hours)
- conduct that adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect, the good order and management of the school (may be ground for exclusion even if the conduct does not happen on school premises or during school hours)
- the student's attendance at the school poses an unacceptable risk to the safety or wellbeing of other students or staff

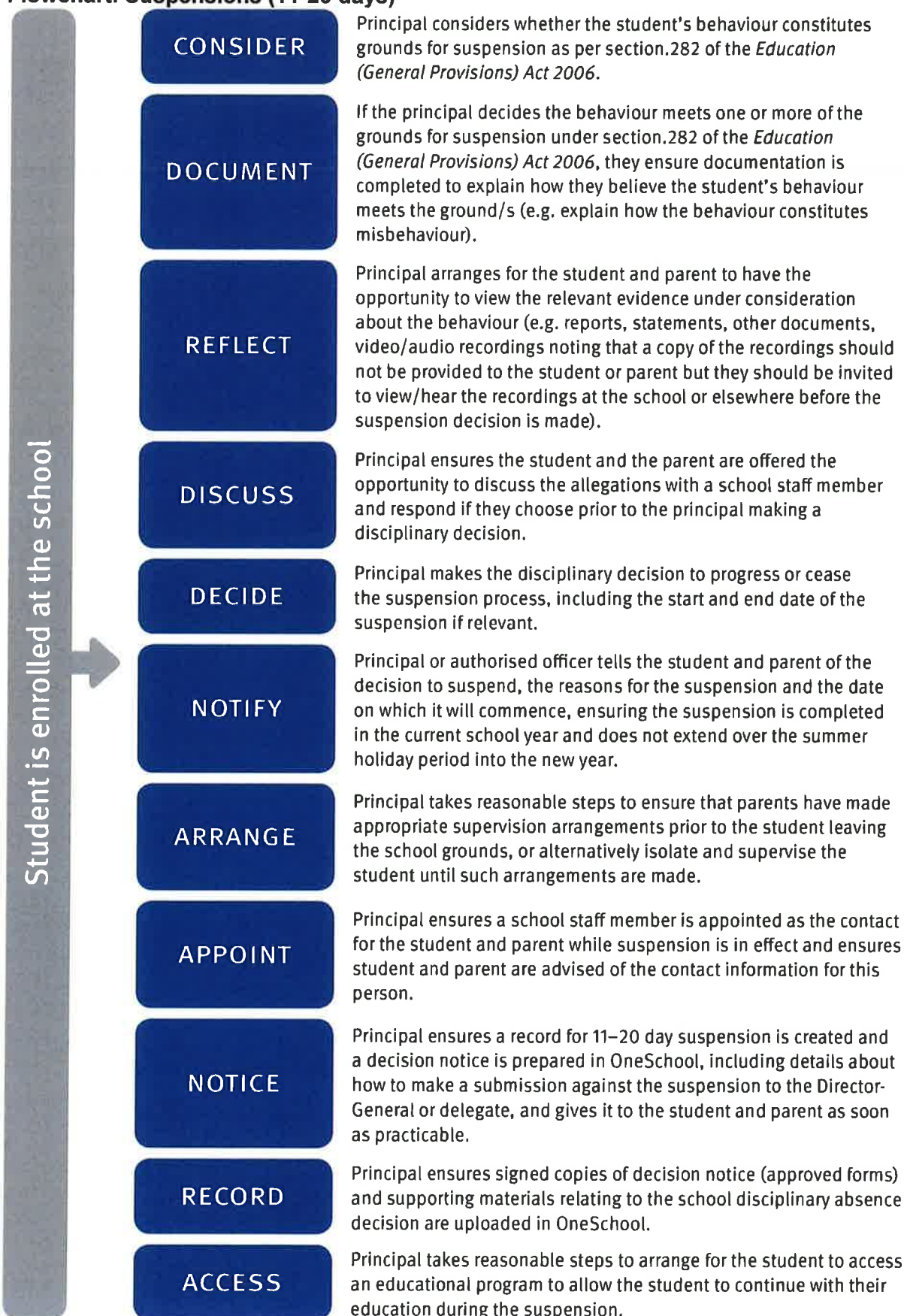
It is also ground for exclusion if:

- the student has been convicted of an offence and the Principal is reasonably satisfied it would not be in the best interests of other students or staff for the student to continue to be enrolled at the school
- provide the student and parent written notice of the proposed exclusion on the approved form
- ensure the student and parent have at least five school days of receiving the proposed exclusion notice to provide relevant additional information or responses to allegations prior to making a final decision
- finalise the decision within 20 school days of providing the student and parent with the proposed exclusion notice
- provide the student and parent written notice of the exclusion decision on the approved form
- may authorise a Deputy Principal, Head of School or Head of Campus to tell a student and parent of the Principal's decision to exclude.

## Flowchart: Suspensions (1-10 days)

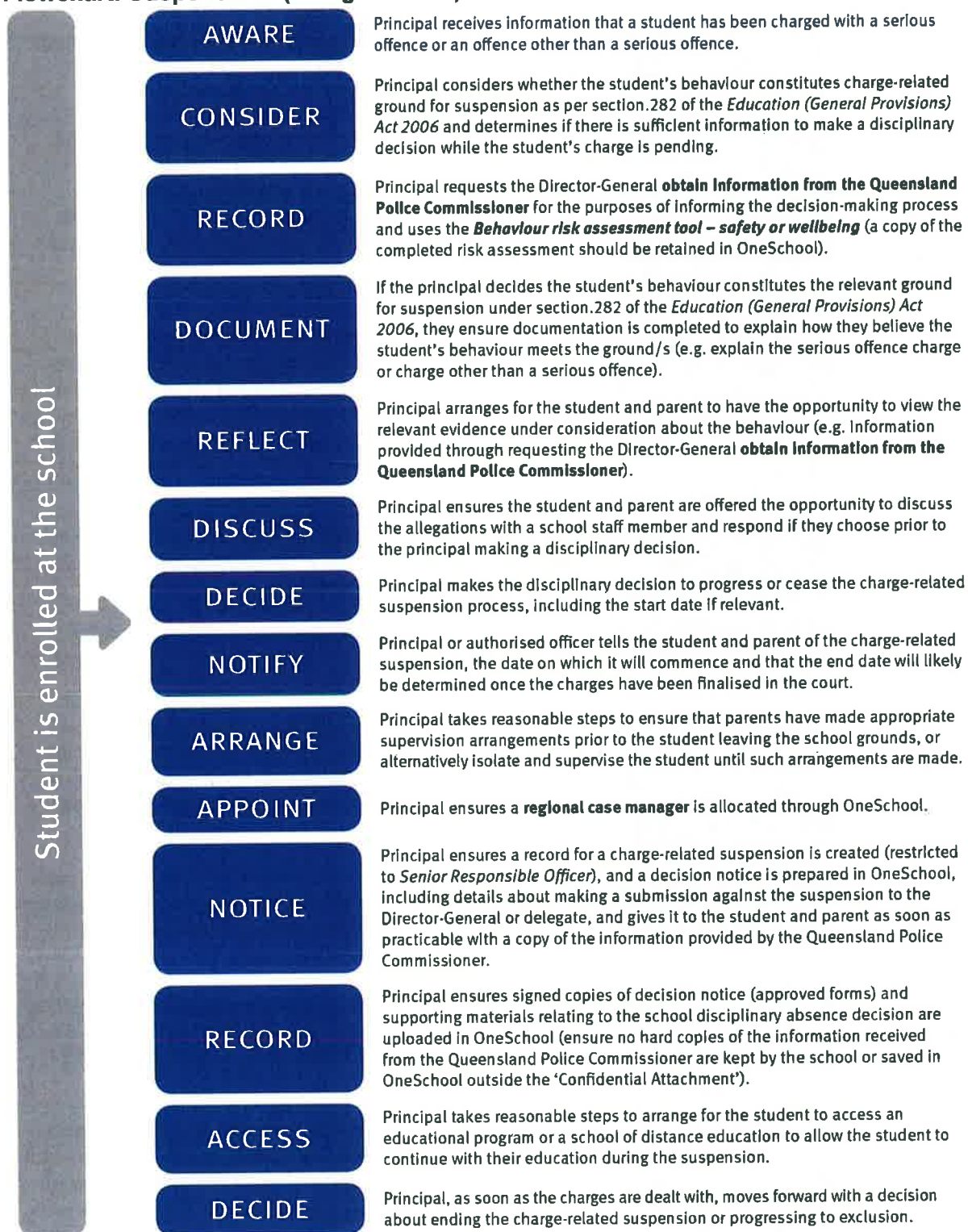


## Flowchart: Suspensions (11-20 days)



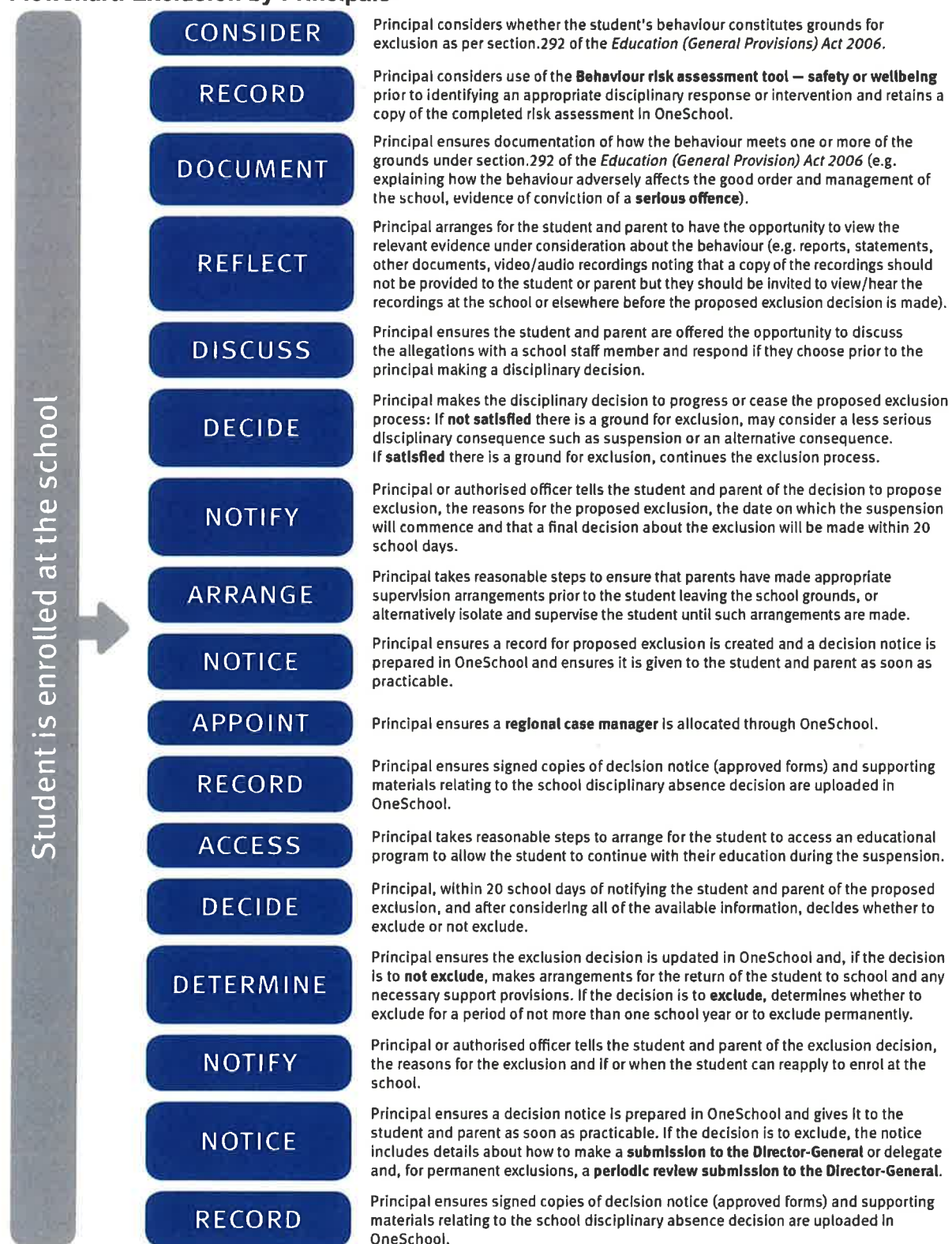


## Flowchart: Suspensions (charge-related)



\* At any time throughout the charge-related suspension, the principal may seek an update on the status of the student's charges through an additional request to the Director-General to **obtain Information from the Queensland Police Commissioner**.

## Flowchart: Exclusion by Principals



\* Failure to make the exclusion decision within the legislated 20 school days will result in the final decision being that the student is not excluded and can return to school.

## School Policies

Toowoomba North State School has 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 Toowoomba North State School and will be removed if found in a student's possession:

- illegal items or weapons (e.g. guns, knives\*, throwing stars, brass knuckles, chains)
- 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, including flick knives, ballistic knives, sheath knives, push daggers, trench knives, butterfly knives, star knives, butter knives, fruit knives or craft knives, or any item that can be used as a weapon, for example a chisel. Knives needed for school activities will be provided by the school, and the use of them will be supervised by school staff. In circumstances where students are required to have their own knives or sharp

tools for particular subjects or vocational courses, the school will provide information about the procedures for carrying and storing these items at school.

**\*\* 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 Toowoomba North State School:**

- do not require the student's consent to search school property such as lockers, desks or laptops 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 student or parent is required to examine or otherwise deal with the temporarily removed student property. For example, staff who temporarily remove a mobile phone from a student are not authorised to unlock the phone or to read, copy or delete messages stored on the phone;
- 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 Toowoomba North State 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 Toowoomba North State 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 Toowoomba North State 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 Toowoomba North State 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. However, the benefits brought about through these diverse technologies can be easily overshadowed by deliberate misuse which harms others or disrupts learning.

### Responsibilities

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

It is **acceptable** for students at Toowoomba North State 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 Toowoomba North State School to:

- use a mobile phone at school. (Switch off and hand in mobile phones to the office for the school day).
- 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 cameras or videoing anywhere a normal camera would be considered inappropriate, such as in change rooms or toilets
- invade someone's privacy by 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 act in line with the requirements of the Toowoomba North State 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
- 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**

Toowoomba North State 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.

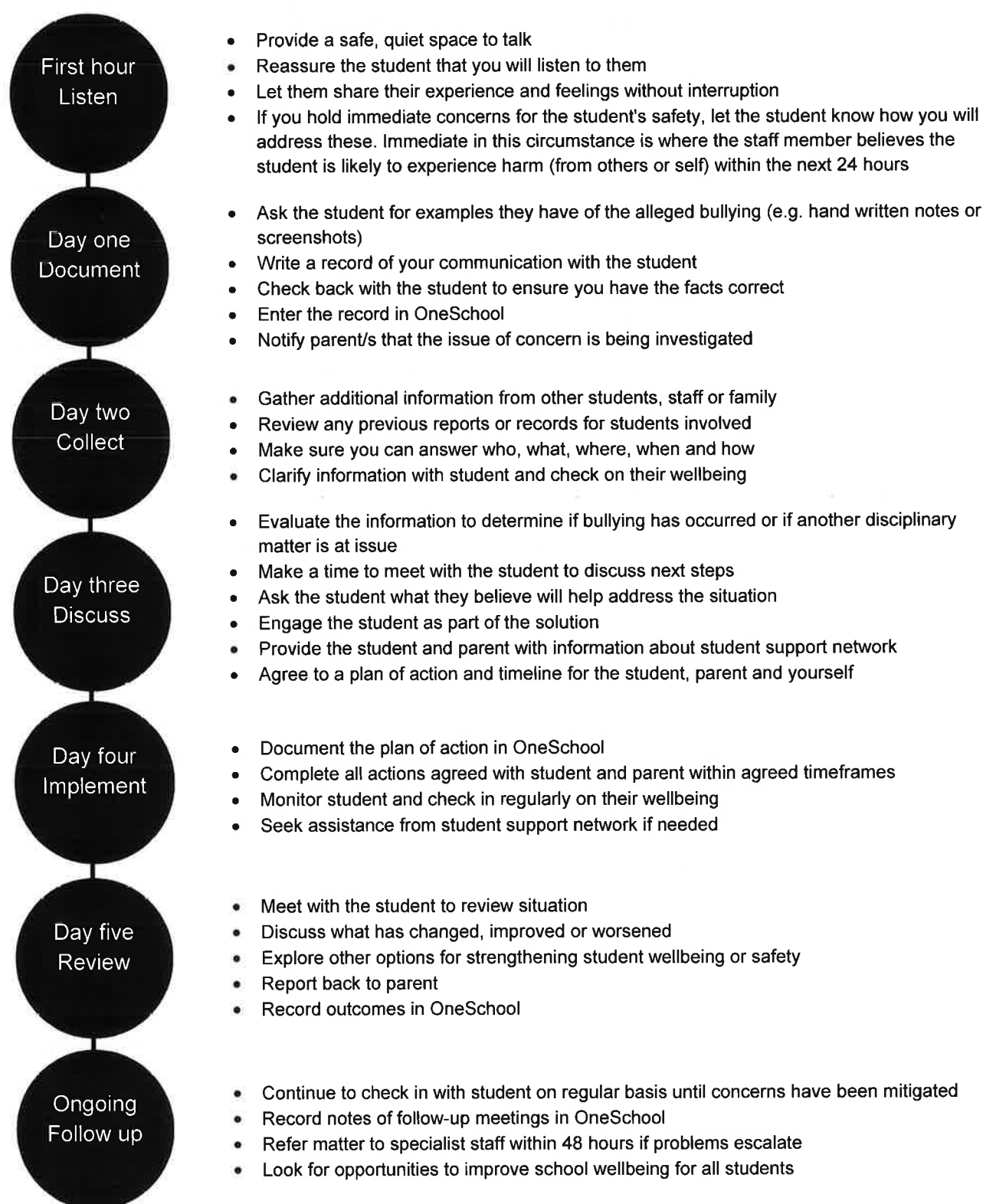
However, these conflicts are still considered serious and need to be addressed and resolved. At Toowoomba North State School our staff will work to quickly respond to any matters raised of this nature in collaboration with students and parents.



The following flowchart explains the actions Toowoomba North State School teachers will take when they receive a report about student bullying, including bullying which may have occurred online or outside of the school setting.

### **Toowoomba North State School - Bullying response flowchart for teachers**

Please note these timelines may be adjusted depending on the unique circumstances and risk associated with each situation. This is at the professional judgment of the staff involved. Timeframes should be clearly discussed and agreed with student and family. Students and parents need to report bullying to their class teacher first.





## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is treated at Toowoomba North State School with the same level of seriousness as in-person bullying. The major difference with cyberbullying however, is that unlike in-person bullying, cyberbullying follows students into their community, their homes and their bedrooms, giving them no opportunity to escape the harassment or abuse during the evening, weekends or holidays.

In the first instance, students or parents who wish to make a report about cyberbullying should approach the class teacher or school principal.

It is important for students, parents and staff to know that state school principals have the authority to take disciplinary action to address student behaviours that occur outside of school hours or school grounds. This includes cyberbullying. Parents and students who have concerns about cyberbullying incidents occurring during school holidays should immediately seek assistance through the [Office of the e-Safety Commissioner](#) or the Queensland Police Service.

Students enrolled at Toowoomba North State School may face in-school disciplinary action, such as detention or removing of privileges, or more serious consequences such as suspension or exclusion from school for engaging in behaviour that adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect, other students or the good order and management of the school. This includes behaviour such as cyberbullying which occurs outside of school hours or settings, for example on the weekend or during school holidays. It also applies to inappropriate online behaviour of enrolled students that is directed towards other community members or students from other school sites.

Parents or other stakeholders who engage in inappropriate online behaviour towards students, staff or other parents may be referred to the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner and/or the Queensland Police Service. State school staff will be referred for investigation to the Integrity and Employee Relations team in the Department of Education. Any questions or concerns about the school process for managing or responding to cyberbullying should be directed to the principal, Kaarin Littleton.

## Cybersafety and Reputation Management (CRM)

The Department of Education employs a dedicated team of experts to assist in maintaining the integrity of the department's reputation with regards to cybersafety and reputation management issues, effectively leading the development and implementation of departmental cybersafety processes.

This team provides **direct support for schools** to respond to concerns of inappropriate online behaviour and misuse of information and communication technology.

The team provides a [guide for parents](#) with important information about cybersafety and cyberbullying, and suggestions about what you can do if your child is a target or responsible for inappropriate online behaviour.

The team has also developed a [Cyberbullying and reputation management](#) (Department employees only) resource to assist principals in incident management.

## **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. Imagine if your doctor, accountant or banking institution tried to contact you to discuss important matters via Facebook.

If you have raised an issue with the 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 Toowoomba North State 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 risky 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.

**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

Toowoomba North State 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](http://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.