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Mackay West State School

Student Code of Conduct 2025-2027

Equity and Excellence: realising the potential of every student

Equity and Excellence outlines the government's vision for a progressive, high-performing education system. Equity and Excellence provides clarity for schools about priorities and expectations, with differentiated support targeted to each school's context and needs.

Queensland Department of Education

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to the Department of Education Policy and Procedure Register at https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/student-discipline-procedure to ensure you have the most current version of this document.

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Endorsement

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Principal Signature:	
Date:	18/08/2025

P/C President Name:	Rachel Blaxland
P/C President Signature:	
Date:	18/08/2025

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Purpose

Mackay West State School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff. We support positive student behaviour through a shared understanding that behaviour is taught and that behaviour has a function that can be addressed.

We embrace an all-inclusive environment allowing all students to experience success and gain confidence in every aspect of school life. Our teachers provide engaging learning experiences that encourage students to think critically and creatively in all areas of the curriculum. We foster a connected relationship between our diverse community, our staff and our active learners. This resilient, solution-driven approach empowers our students to thrive in our ever-changing world.

Whole School Approach to Discipline

Mackay West 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, cultural 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 Mackay West 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 Mackay West 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 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 admin team.

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 four Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) expectations in place for students. The Mackay West State School members are Safe, Respectful, Responsible Learners.

Students
Below are examples of what these PBL expectations look like for students across the school. In addition, each classroom will have their own set of examples to help students and visitors understand the expectations and meet the standards we hold for everyone at Mackay West State School.

I am Safe
- Move appropriately from place to place
- Stay in designated areas
- Listen to and follow adult instruction
- Know the procedures for safety drills
- Show care and concern for yourself and others

I am Respectful
- Use manners, polite and appropriate language
- Be friendly and helpful to others
- Take pride in yourself, your school, and wear the school uniform proudly
- Take care of your own, other's and school properly

I am Responsible
- Respond appropriately when being directed by an adult.
- Make good choices
- Be organised
- Attend each day and arrive on time – Every Day Counts

I am a Learner
- Set goals and always do your best
- Persistence resilience and confidence in all that you do
- Ask for assistance when required
- Be confident in your learning

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

I am Safe

What we expect to see from you	What you can expect from us
You support your child to follow school rules to maintain safety for themselves, peers and staff.	We are clear about our processes around safety in the school and contact parents if the safety of your child is at risk.
You stay informed around safety processes at Mackay West State School.	We will use the electronic school newsletter and social media platforms as the primary means of notifying parents about school safety processes.
You approach the class teacher or principal if you are concerned about the safety of a staff member, another student or parent.	We will work with every family to quickly address any complaints or concerns about the safety of staff, students or parents.

I am Respectful

What we expect to see from you	What you can expect from us
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 stay informed about school news and activities by reading the school newsletter and other materials sent home by school staff.	We will use the electronic school newsletter, social media platforms as the primary means of notifying parents about school news, excursions or events.
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.

I am Responsible

What we expect to see from you	What you can expect from us
You support your child to meet the learning and behaviourial 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 ensure your children attends 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 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.

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I am a Learner

What we expect to see from you	What you can expect from us
You support your child to meet the learning expectations at school.	We are clear about our learning and expectations, and contact you to provide regular feedback about your child's progress.
You ensure your children attends 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 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.

Consideration of Individual Circumstances

Staff at Mackay West 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 equity, 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 consequence 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 including bullying very seriously, and will address them promptly and appropriately. We expect that parents and students will respect the privacy of other students and families.

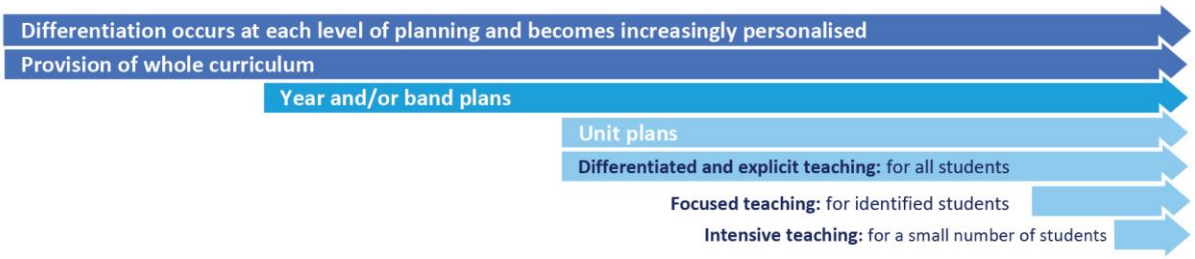
If you have concerns about the behaviour of another student at the school, or the way our staff have responded to their behaviour, please make an appointment with the principal to discuss the matter.

Differentiated and Explicit Teaching

Mackay West 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 Mackay West 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 focussed 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 Expectations Matrix, illustrated below, as a basis for developing their behaviour standards. Using this matrix, the class teacher works with all students to explain exactly what each of the expectations look, sound and feel like in their classroom. The completed matrix is on display in every classroom, used as the basis of teaching expectations throughout the year and revisited regularly to address any new or emerging issues.

Mackay West State School
Positive Behaviour for Learning Matrix

	I AM SAFE	I AM RESPONSIBLE	I AM RESPECTFUL	I AM A LEARNER
All Areas	• Show care and concern for yourself and others. • Walk safely from place to place. • Remain in adult supervised areas. • Follow safety drill procedures. • Safe hands and feet at school.	• Be organised and prepared for school • Attend each day and arrive on time -**EVERY DAY COUNTS**. • Take care of our school environment, your own and other's property. • Be truthful and accept actions have consequences.	• Listen to and follow adult instructions. • Take pride in yourself and your school. • Wear the school uniform with pride. • Take your hat off when indoors.	• Remember the school motto: 'Always our Best' • Set goals. • Ask for help when needed. • Persistence, resilience and confidence in all that you do.
Classroom	• Enter classrooms only when a staff member is present. • Walk and move sensibly and safely around the classroom. • Use furniture and equipment safely.	• Work productively when completing all set tasks. • Keep your learning area organised. • Have your learning equipment ready at the start of the day.	• Raise your hand to speak at appropriate times. • Value everyone's contributions and opinions. • Respect everyone's right to learn.	• Participate and be an active learner.
Eating Area	• Sit quietly while eating. • Sit down and stay seated. • Leave shut lunch boxes in designated areas.	• Eat your own lunch. • Put your rubbish in the bin. • Wait patiently until dismisses for play.	• Use manners towards the tuckshop helpers. • Put your hand up and ask if you need something.	
Play Area	• Walk to your play area when directed. • Participate in school-approved safe activities • Always wear a hat and shoes. • Ask for permission before leaving school grounds. • Play in your own year level areas.	• Report dangerous/ harmful play or injury as soon as it happens to staff on duty. • Use equipment for its correct purpose. • Return sports equipment	• Take turns and cooperate when playing. • Show positive sportsmanship. • Show care and concern towards your peers.	• Know the rules of the game. • Know the routines around lining up at the end of play.
Toilets	• Wash hands with soap and water. • Paper in the bin.	• Use toilet for its purpose. • Report any hazards/ misbehaviour.	• Respect others' privacy. • One person in each toilet cubicle.	
To/From School	• Know how you are getting home. • Travel directly to and from school. • Tell an adult if you feel unsafe. • Use the school crossings	• Stay seated in moving vehicles including buses. • Wear a seatbelt. • Stay inside school grounds until you are collected.	• Follow bus rules. • Be respectful to your bus driver and fellow passengers. • Wear full uniform with pride when out of school.	• Know the before school routines. • Know and apply the road rules.
Before/After School	• Dismount and walk your bike/ scooter on school grounds. • Wait under West Wing/Junior Campus covered area. • Use playgrounds only when supervised by school staff.		• Sit quietly while waiting for collection	• Know the routines for the bus, Stop/Drop/ Go and PCYC.
Online	• Report anything that makes you feel unsafe. • Keep passwords safe and to yourself. • Keep personal details private and avoid oversharing.	• Use school technology/resources for educational purposes. • Only access online content that is age appropriate.	• Communicate positively and respectfully online.	• Use technology to enhance your learning.

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Focused Teaching

Even after being provided with differentiated and explicit teaching, approximately 15% of all students in any school or classroom may require additional support to meet behaviour expectations. 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 specialist expertise in learning, language or development, work collaboratively with class teachers at Mackay West State School to provide focused teaching. Focused teaching is aligned to the PBL Expectations Matrix, and student progress is monitored by the classroom teacher/s to identify those who:

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

Mackay West State School has a range of Student Support Network staff in place to help arrange and deliver focused teaching to students who need more support to meet expectations. In addition, the school invests in the following evidence-informed programs to address specific skill development for some students:

- Functional behaviour assessments
- Zones of regulation

For more information about these programs, please speak with the members of the Positive Behaviour for Learning Team within the school.

Intensive Teaching

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.

Disciplinary Consequences

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

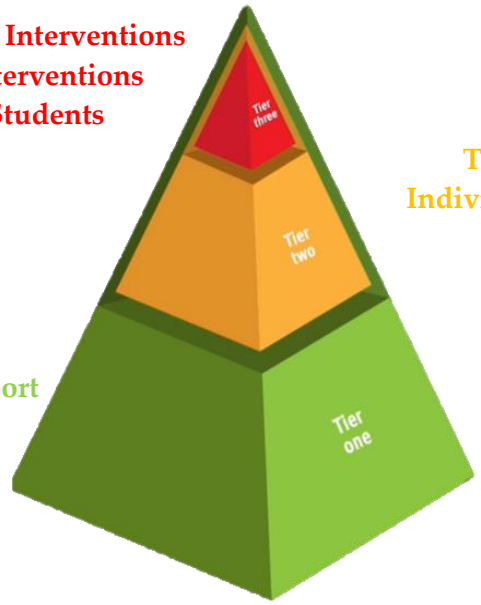
The majority of students will be confident and capable of meeting established expectations that are clear, explicitly taught and practised. In-class corrective feedback, sanctions and rule reminders may be used by teachers to respond to low-level or minor problem behaviours.

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 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.

Tier 3 / Intensive Interventions
Individual Interventions
1%-5% of Students



Tier 2 / Targeted Interventions
Individual and Small Group Strategies
5%-10% of Students

Tier 1 / Universal Support
School Wide Systems of Support
80%-90% of Students

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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 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 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 and playground 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 – Good Ones
- Behaviour intervention time
- Behavioural contract
- Counselling and guidance support
- Self-monitoring plan
- Check in Check Out strategy
- Teacher coaching and debriefing
- Referral to SAWC 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.

Teachers use the Mackay West State School's behaviour definitions and Classroom Behaviour Management Plan in conjunction with data analysis to determine what level of intervention a student may need.

Major v Minor Behaviour

OneSchool Category	Definition	Severity	Example
Abusive Language	Student frequently uses inappropriate language in the classroom and/or playground not directed at a person	Minor	Student swears everyday while playing soccer
	Student delivers verbal messages that include swearing, name calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way	Major	Student calls an adult an offensive name, or directs swearing at them
Academic misconduct	Student makes a statement with the intention to deceive	Minor	Students is untruthful to an adult ie the dog ate my homework
	Student inappropriately and falsely demonstrates their learning. Student has been involved in cheating, collusion, contract cheating, copying work, disclosing/receiving assessment information, fabricating, impersonation or examination misconduct plagiarism.	Major	Student copies an entire assessment of their peers and claims it to be their own
Bomb threat/false alarm	Student delivers a message of possible explosive materials being on campus, near campus, and/or pending explosion.	Major	Student makes a phone call to the school saying there is a bomb.
Bullying	Student uses verbal and/or body language to exclude a student from a situation with the intention of outcome to make the student feel socially and emotionally uncomfortable	Minor	Student continually does not allow another student to play without legitimate reason
	Student engages in deliberate verbal, physical and/or social behaviour intended to cause ongoing physical social and/or psychological harm. Bullying can occur in person, or online (cyberbullying). Bullying may be obvious or hidden.	Major	Student conspires with other student/s to run away from another student
			Student targets and slide tackles the same student in soccer everyday
Defiance	Student refuses to follow an instruction given by a staff member regarding continued behaviour or action that has previously been discussed and redirected by staff.	Minor	Student makes a conscious choice not to follow an instruction given by a staff member that results in the disruption of other's learning
	Student refuses to follow directions given by school staff	Major	Student makes a conscious choice not to follow an instruction given by a staff member that results in the safety of oneself or others being jeopardised
Disrespect	Student deliberately delivers socially rude or dismissive messages to adults or students.	Minor	Student repeatedly uses disrespectful non-verbal gestures to staff ie. eye-rolling
		Major	Student calls a staff member inappropriate names to their face

Disruption	Student engages in low intensity but inappropriate disruption	Minor	Student engages in off task behaviours such as consistently talking while the teacher is talking causing disruption to learning of others
	Student engages in behaviour causing an interruption in a class or school activity or event. Disruption includes sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials; and/or sustained out-of-seat behaviour.	Major	Student engages in sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials; and/or sustained out-of-seat behaviour
Dress Code	Student wears clothing that is not within the dress code guidelines defined by the school.	Major	Student frequently wears a pink shirt to school rather than the prescribed school uniform shirt.
Falsifying documents	Student deliberately creates, changes or modifies a document with the intention of misleading. It includes signing a person's name without that person's permission.	Major	Student deliberately creates, changes or modifies a document with the intention of misleading. Eg. Forging parent's signature on excursion form.
Fighting	Student is involved in mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence.	Major	Student is involved in mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence.
Harassment	Student engages in the delivery of harmful messages in any format related to gender identity; ethnicity; sex; race; religion; disability; physical features or other identity characteristics.	Major	Student engages in teasing, emotional or verbal intimidation or exclusion of others – one off incident
Physical aggression	Student engages in non-serious but inappropriate physical contact (horseplay).	Minor	Student engages in playful pushing or barging of another student
			Student pulls on another student's leg or arm
	Student deliberately engages in actions involving physical contact with others where injury may occur. This includes premeditated acts or incitement of others to undertake physical aggression. Physical aggression may be directed towards peers, adults, visitors or animals; or flora or fauna.	Major	Students engages in; hitting, slapping, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, biting etc
Property damage	Student participates in an activity that results in destruction, damage or disfigurement of property.	Minor	Student smears soap on toilet mirrors
			Drawing on a desk or chair with permanent marker
		Major	Student vandalises furniture to a point of no repair
Property misuses causing risk to others	Student engages in inappropriate physical conduct using an object	Minor	Student throws sporting equipment in anger
	Student engages in misuse of property which may cause a risk of injury or ill-health to others. Behaviour involving throwing objects or using objects in an unsafe manner causing injury.	Major	Student throws an object that is of significant weight or sharpness, likely to cause physical damage or harm; scissors, desk, knife, shovel etc.
Refusal to participate in the educational program of the school	Student refuses to participate in classroom, homework, assessment task but does not disrupt	Minor	Student continued refusal to attempt the task following further direction and assistance provided by staff member.
	Student refuses to take part in activities or learning that are requested or expected as part of the educational program at the school.	Major	Persistent refusal to participate in educational tasks and programs of instruction as directed by the teacher. Behaviour that is repeated over an extended period of time.
Substance misconduct involving tobacco and other legal substance	Student is in possession of, has supplied or is using illegal drugs/substances/imitations or implements.	Major	Student is in possession of, has supplied or is using illegal drugs/substances/imitations or implements.
Technology violation	Student engages in inappropriate (as defined by school) use of mobile phone, drone, smartwatch, camera, computer or other communication device.	Minor	Student constantly hits the keys whilst waiting for the computer to load
			Student presents a mobile phone at lunch time
			Student searches inappropriate subject matter/ attempts to use inappropriate websites
		Major	Student uses electronic devices to capture images or recordings of others without school permission
			Student is involved in fraudulent or illegal activity such as attempting to hack, implementing DoS attacks, use of key loggers, impersonating staff or other students.
Theft	Student is involved by being in possession of, having passed on, or being responsible for removing school or someone else's property.	Major	Student uses deception to take another person's money or possessions.
Truancy (out of school)	Student is absent from school (morning, afternoon or entire school day) without permission or appropriate reason (i.e. an unauthorised absence).	Major	Not attending school without parent or caregivers' knowledge of non-attendance
Truancy (out of class)	Student leaves a lesson without permission and with no appropriate reason to do so, for avoidance	Minor	Student leaves the classroom and stays within viewing distance.
	Student is present at school but is absent for one or more scheduled classes without permission or appropriate reason (i.e. an unauthorised absence).	Major	Student chooses to hide under the stairs rather than report to their spelling lesson
Use/possession of combustibles	Student is/was in possession of substances/objects readily capable of causing bodily harm and/or property damage	Major	Student bring; matches, lighters, firecrackers, petrol, lighter fluid or aerosols
Use/possession of weapons	Student is in possession of knives and guns (real or look alike), or other objects readily capable of causing bodily harm.	Major	Student brings a knife to school
Other – charge-related suspension	Principal is reasonably satisfied that the student has been charged with a serious offence; or charged with an offence other than a serious offence, and that the nature of the offence precludes the student's attendance on the basis that they pose an unacceptable risk to other students or staff.	Major	

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Classroom Behaviour Management Plan

Mackay West State School
"Always Our Best"

Ongoing teaching of expected behaviour

Acknowledgment of expected behaviour

- Verbal praise
- Non-verbal praise (thumbs up)
- Stickers/Stamps
- Good Ones

Inappropriate behaviour occurs

Major

Dangerous, illegal, disruptive to learning

Duty Officer Contact

Plan B: if possible
A: Acknowledge the they are upset (feelings real, behaviour ineffective)
B: Behaviour change: do something different; remove child or class
C: Calm down (motionless)
D: Dialogue to create a plan (mindfulness)
E: Enact an explicit plan

Consequences supervised by Duty Officer

Correction Plan – Managed by Classroom Teacher

Eg. Refusal, left class & in sight, low level

Universal Strategies

- Proximity
- Non-verbal cue
- Restitution
- Support for procedure
- Ensure task is at the right level
- Increase pre-corrects

- Redirect
- Re-teach
- Provide choice
- Conference
- Ensure task is at the right level
- Provide additional time
- Consult with year level or department team

Minor

Think Time: 5min>10min
The student is advised to take some think time to reflect and cool off. The teacher will invite the student back to resume classroom activities (Student must not leave the room)

Time out with Buddy Teacher: The student is to go to another teachers' classroom for think time. (Ensure the student has self-managed work to continue and don't forget to invite student to come back to resume classroom activities)

Detention: Lunch Time – supervised by the class teacher

Behaviour does not improve

Restitution Plan:

- Plan Behaviour Goals for student to achieve when returning to the classroom.
- Discussion with student based on getting back on track.

Assistance from:

- Parents
- Student support

Behaviour improves

The individual circumstances of each case will be taken into account when deciding and applying consequences

All minor and major behaviour to be recorded on OneSchool

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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 Mackay West 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 schools 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 Mackay West State School may be invited to attend a re-entry meeting either during their suspension, or 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 via 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-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 focussed on making the student and their family feel welcome back into the school community.

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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.

School Policies

Mackay West State 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.

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The following items are explicitly prohibited at Mackay West 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).
- Jewellery which poses a workplace health and safety risk to student

* No knives of any type are allowed 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 Mackay West 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;
- require 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;
  Note: 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);
- require 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 Mackay West State School

- ensure child(ren) 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 Mackay West 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 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.

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Students of Mackay West 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 Mackay West 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 like mobile phones. However, the benefits brought about through these diverse technologies can be easily overshadowed by deliberate misuse which harms others or disrupts learning.

In consultation with the broader school community, Mackay West State School has determined that explicit teaching of responsible use of mobile phones and other 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.

It is also agreed that time and space should be provided at school where technology is not permitted, and students are encouraged to engage in other social learning and development activities.

If a student reuireds a mobile phone, it is to be handed in at the office prior to the commencement of learning and collected at the end of the school day.

Responsibilities

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

It is **acceptable** for students at Mackay West State School to:

- use allocated 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 mobile device
- switch off and place the mobile device out of sight during classes, before and after school, and during lunch breaks unless the device is being used in a teacher directed activity to enhance learning
- seek teacher's approval where they wish to use a mobile device under special circumstances

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It is **unacceptable** for students at Mackay West State School to:

- use a mobile phone or other 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 device cameras 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
- use a mobile phone (including those with Bluetooth functionality) to cheat during exams or assessments
- take into or use mobile devices at exams or during class assessment unless expressly permitted by school staff.

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 Mackay West 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

Mackay West 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.

Mackay West State School has a **Social Academic and Wellbeing Committee (SAWC)**, with diverse representatives from each year level meeting regularly with the school leadership team to promote strategies to improve student wellbeing, safety and learning outcomes. The standing items on the agenda for each SAWC meeting are the core elements of the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework:

1. **Leadership**
   Principals and school leaders playing an active role in building a positive learning environment where the whole school community feels included, connected, safe and respected.

2. **Inclusion**
   All members of the school community actively participating in building a welcoming school culture that values diversity, and fosters positive, respectful relationships.

3. **Student voice**
   Students actively participate in their own learning and wellbeing, feel connected and use their social and emotional skills to be respectful, resilient and safe.

4. **Partnerships**
   Families and communities collaborating as partners with the school to support student learning, safety and wellbeing.

5. **Support**
   School staff, students and families sharing and cultivating an understanding of wellbeing and positive behaviour and how this supports effective teaching and learning.

A priority for the Student Academic and Wellbeing Committee is contributing to the implementation of strategies that enhance wellbeing, promote safety and counter violence, bullying and abuse in all online and physical spaces. The engagement of young people in the design of technology information and digital education programs for parents was a key recommendation from the Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce report in 2018, and at Mackay West State School we believe students should be at the forefront of advising staff, parents and the broader community about emerging issues and practical solutions suitable to different contexts.

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 Mackay West 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 Mackay West 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. Please note that the indicative timeframes will vary depending on the professional judgment of teachers who receive the bullying complaint and their assessment of immediate risk to student/s.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is treated at Mackay West State School with the same level of seriousness as in-person bullying. The major difference with cyberbullying however, is that unlike in-person bulling, 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 regular class teacher (for students in primary year levels) or the form class teacher (for students in secondary year levels). There is also a dedicated senior leadership officer, Dean of Students Malcolm Smith, who can be approached directly by students, parents or staff for assistance in preventing and responding to cyberbullying.

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 Mackay West 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 of Mackay West State School.

Mackay West State School - Cyberbullying response flowchart for school staff

How to manage online incidents that impact your school

Student protection
If at any point the principal forms a reasonable suspicion that a student has been harmed or is at risk of harm, they have a responsibility to respond in accordance with the Student protection procedure.

Explicit images
If the investigation involves naked or explicit images of children, staff should not save, copy, forward or otherwise deal with the content, as per the Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure. This includes onto OneSchool records. Refer to the investigative process outlined in 'Responding to incidents involving naked or explicit images of children' from the Online Incident management guidelines.

Report
Refer to the Online incident management guidelines for more details, or if assistance is required, contact the Cybersafety and Reputation Management (CSRM)team on 3034 5035 or Cybersafety.ReputationManagement@qed.qld.gov.au.

Does the online behaviour/incident **negatively impact the good order and management** of the school?

YES OR **NO**

1. Initiate an incident response
Start an incident management log (running sheet) which records times and dates of events, observations, tasks completed, persons involved and written conversational notes.

2. Collect evidence
Gather and preserve any evidence of the online content or a potential unlawful online behaviour, where legally permissible. Confiscation of digital devices can only be done under the Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure.

3. Is there a potential crime?
The Queensland Criminal Code contains several applicable sections for cyberbullying. A list of potential relevant criminal offences can be viewed at Appendix 3, and include:

- unlawful stalking
- computer hacking and misuse
- possession, distribution and making child exploitation material
- fraud — obtaining or dealing with identification information
- criminal defamation.

Inform the student's parent/s (and student if appropriate) of their options:

1. Report the incident to an external agency such as police, Office of the eSafety Commissioner or the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network.
2. Report the online content/behaviour using the online tools provided by the website or app.

Principals may start contact with a law enforcement agency (LEA) by completing an LEA referral form, under the Disclosing personal information to law enforcement agencies procedure. Refer back to Step 3 to report potential crimes that do not negatively impact the good order of the school.

YES

Principals may start contact with a law enforcement agency (LEA) by completing an LEA referral form. Information can be shared when reasonably satisfied the disclosure is necessary for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution or punishment of a criminal offence or to assist in averting a serious risk to the life, health or safety of a person or where the disclosure is in the public interest. For access to the relevant forms, refer to Disclosing personal information to law enforcement agencies procedure.

Principals may continue to investigate the matter for disciplinary purposes, subject to all laws and department procedures.

NO

Content may not constitute a criminal offence requiring police involvement but it may negatively impact the good order and management of the school. Principals can take action for the online behaviour as outlined below.

4. Take steps to remove the upsetting or inappropriate content
Request poster to remove, use online reporting tools or if assistance is required, contact the CSRM team or Office of eSafety Commissioner.

5. Managing student behaviour
Where the online behaviours of students do negatively impact the good order and management of the school, the principal must take appropriate follow-up action. Where appropriate:

- take statutory disciplinary action to address cyberbullying:
  - that occurs outside of school hours or school grounds that also negatively affects the good order and management of the school (e.g. where the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse have created, or would likely create a risk of, substantial disruption within the school environment, or where the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse has or might reach school premises);
  - that is undertaken on or originating from school premises during school hours, or by means of use of school ICT, concerning other students, staff or members of the school community;

OR

- use non-statutory options to deal with the matter, for example:
  - discussion with student's parents;
  - student mediation;
  - apology;
  - ICT / mobile technology ban;
  - guidance referral.

6. Student welfare
Principals must consider and support the wellbeing of any student who is displaying apparent negative effects from cyberbullying, by means of offering the student guidance officer support.

7. Recording the incident on OneSchool
If the incident was resolved at school-level, record details of the incident, as reported to the school and investigated through the incident management process, in the student's OneSchool behaviour record.

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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.

For more information about cybersafety sessions at your school, or for assistance with issues relating to online behaviour, contact the team (Department employees only).

Student Intervention and Support Services

Mackay West State 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 Mackay West State School are familiar with the response expectations to reports of bullying, and will act quickly to ensure students' concerns are addressed. Depending on the nature of the reported bullying incident, 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 withdrawal from social events or celebrations or more severe punishments such as suspension or exclusion from school.

Mackay West State School – Anti-Bullying Compact

The Anti-Bullying Compact provides a clear outline of the way our community at Mackay West State School works together to establish a safe, supportive and disciplined school environment. This compact is provided to all students and their parents upon enrolment, and may be revisited with individual students if particular problems around bullying arise.

Mackay West State School – Anti Bullying Compact

We agree to work together to improve the quality of relationships in our community at Mackay West State School. It is through intentional consideration of our behaviour and communication that we can reduce the occurrence of bullying, and improve the quality of the schooling experience for everyone.

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.

We believe that no one deserves to be mistreated and that everyone regardless of race, colour, religion, immigration status, nationality, size, gender, popularity, athletic capability, academic outcomes, social ability, or intelligence has the right to feel safe, secure, and respected.

I agree to:

- Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
- Abide by the school's anti-bullying policies and procedures.
- Support individuals who have been bullied.
- Speak out against verbal, relational, physical bullying and cyber bullying.
- Notify a parent, teacher, or school administrator when bullying does occur.

Student's signature

Parent's signature

School representative signature

Date

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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 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* (Cwth) 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 Mackay West 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.

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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

Queensland Government