

Student Behaviour Management Procedure

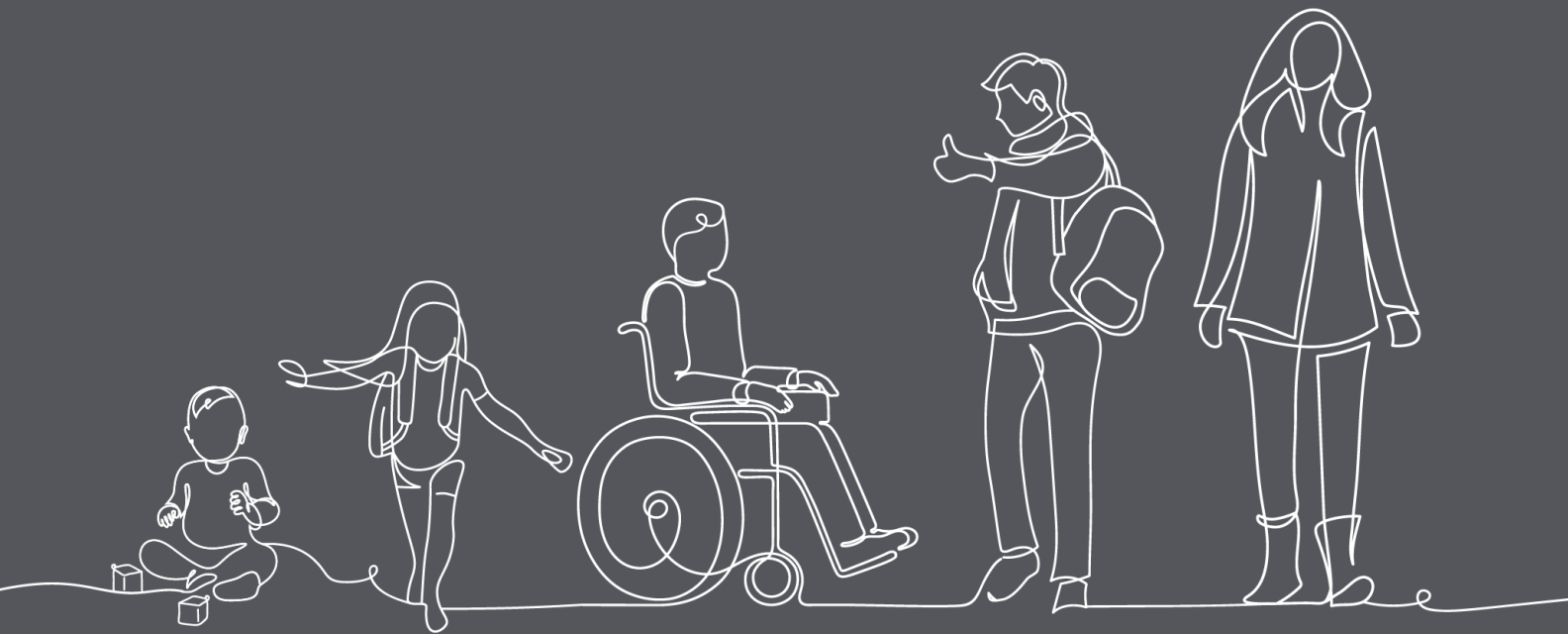


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1 Purpose

To provide schools with support and additional information on the process requirements for implementing the [Department for Education, Children and Young People Student Behaviour Management Policy](#), including:

- what constitutes unacceptable behaviours for students
- expectations/requirements for responding to unacceptable behaviour of students
- minimum standards in preventing, responding, and reporting on bullying.

The content of this Procedure aligns with [DECYP values](#) and reflects a commitment to ensure the values are reflected in all policy and processes.

2 Overview

This Procedure applies to all students enrolled in Tasmanian Government schools.

This Procedure provides schools with support and additional information on the process requirements for implementing the Department for Education, Children and Young People Student Behaviour Management Policy. It outlines a consistent approach to responding to unacceptable behaviour with appropriate intervention strategies, whilst maintaining a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

3 Applying responses to unacceptable behaviour

In responding to behaviour, it must first be assessed whether the behaviour is unacceptable in the school environment.

[Secretary's Instruction No 3 for Unacceptable Behaviour of Students and Volunteers at, and Visitors to, State Schools or School Activities](#) outlines what constitutes unacceptable behaviour of a student at a school. What constitutes unacceptable behaviour is dependent on the context and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. We recognise and take into account that, for some students, unacceptable behaviour may be associated with factors such as disability, trauma, abuse or learning difficulties.

Applying Behavioural Responses

When applying responses to unacceptable behaviour, schools MUST:

- › recognise and take into account that, for some students, unacceptable behaviour may be associated with factors such as disability, trauma, abuse or learning difficulties
- › consider the age and year level of the student
- › consider the circumstances of the student and whether they might be adversely impacted by a behavioural response
- › make all efforts to minimise disruption to the student's learning
- › provide responses that are proportionate to the nature of the unacceptable behaviour
- › consider the importance of establishing and maintaining strong positive relationships with students and parents/carers through positive and effective interactions
- › provide alternative learning options tailored specifically to the needs of a student that reflect the Department for Education, Children and Young People's values.

Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

When responding to unacceptable behaviour, schools MUST:

- › ensure the safety of the student, teachers and other students
- › seek to de-escalate the unacceptable behaviour
- › gather information (eg from the student and others. This may include seeking information about a student to assist in assessing the risk their behaviour may pose.)
- › notify relevant people (eg parent or carer, school social worker or psychologist, police, or the Principal Executive Officer for international students)
- › discuss the unacceptable behaviour or incident with the student (where appropriate)
- › develop and apply school approaches/strategies to prevent such behaviour from occurring in future and address any risks to health and safety of persons at school
- › apply restorative or trauma-informed practices and principles
- › determine whether a risk assessment and risk management plan are necessary
- › hold a conference with the student (and other persons as appropriate)
- › determine appropriate response/s to the unacceptable behaviour.

If the behaviour is disruptive but not dangerous the following responses may be appropriate:

- Utilise break cards or support staff (eg Teacher Assistant) where appropriate.
- Use proximity (by moving closer to the student).
- Name the behaviour and the impact it is having .
- Provide a warning of what will occur if the behaviour continues.
- Separate the student from other students or relocate the student within the classroom, or to another class where appropriate.
- Utilise restorative practices and principles.
- Make contact with their parent or carer.
- Develop strategies to prevent this behaviour from occurring in future.

If the behaviour is dangerous to the student, other persons at the school, or school equipment the following responses may be appropriate:

- Request that the student stop.
- Utilise break cards or support staff where appropriate.

If the behaviour continues, take steps to keep everyone safe (eg requesting staff support, moving other students away from the student who is behaving dangerously):

- Use restorative practices and principles.
- Make contact with their parent or carer.
- Develop strategies to prevent this behaviour from occurring in future.

Additional responses to unacceptable behaviour may include:

- withdrawing certain privileges (eg participation in school athletics carnival)
- applying a detention
- liaising with GETI regarding formal warnings for international students.

3.1 Unacceptable behaviour outside of a school environment

- If schools are made aware that unacceptable behaviour between students has taken place (at school, a school activity or outside of school) and that behaviour is having a negative impact on student learning and/or wellbeing at school, the school will use restorative practices and principles to:
 - develop an understanding of why the behaviour occurred
 - support the student/s to understand the impact of their behaviour on others
 - repair and build relationships that have been affected by their behaviour
 - develop strategies to prevent such behaviour from occurring in future.
- Detention, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, or prohibition can only be applied when unacceptable behaviour of a student occurs at school or at a school activity.
- In serious cases it may be appropriate for the school to refer the matter to a relevant authority (eg the police).

Unacceptable behaviour outside of school	Examples
Bullying, including cyberbullying	Unacceptable behaviour that takes place outside of school such as the bus ride between home and school or in an online forum such as social media.
Discrimination	Severe ridicule of others because of their race, religion, gender identity or sexuality in an online forum or travelling to and from school.
Behaviour that is likely to bring that school into disrepute	Posting videos online of physical altercations that occurred outside of school between students who are wearing school uniform.

4 Managing health and safety risks a student poses to themselves or others at the school

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

Note:

- Additional advice is being prepared in relation to the approaches principals may decide to implement if they need to assess, remove or reduce health and safety risks beyond what is able to be managed within the school's policies and processes (including the Department *for* Education, Children and Young People Student Behaviour Management Procedure).
- This will include advice on how principals *may* choose to use their authority to require information from relevant agencies or services about a student based on the student's behaviour and context.

5 Processes for applying behavioural responses

Non-urgent and immediate suspensions

1. Suspensions *may* be applied for any of the categories of unacceptable behaviour identified in the Department *for* Education, Children and Young People's Student Behaviour Management Policy.
2. Once the principal has made a decision to suspend a student for up to 10 days, the school **MUST** verbally inform the student and make reasonable attempts to contact the student's parent/carer or another primary contact person (for international students, the Principal Education Officer (GETI) informing them of the suspension.
3. The principal **MUST** generate a suspension letter in the Student Support System (SSS) which is to be sent to the parent/carer or independent student by Priority Mail.
4. The principal **MUST** ensure, as soon as practicable, that a full report detailing the circumstances underlying the suspension is recorded appropriately in SSS as a quick note/observation.
5. The principal **MUST** ensure that any associated support activities are recorded in SSS.
6. The principal **MUST** ensure that the student has been provided with educational instruction for the period of the suspension.
7. During the period of suspension or on the day of re-entry, the school and student **MUST** participate in a re-entry conference to form a mutually agreed plan for the student's re-entry to school. Parents or carers should be invited to attend.
8. Where the principal has complied with the Student Behaviour Management Policy **AND** the response has not been effective in dealing with the unacceptable behaviour **AND** the unacceptable behaviour of the student justifies a response greater than 10 days' suspension, the principal *may* either:
 - Request a further behavioural response be imposed at the time of applying the initial suspension (suspension **MUST** be 10 days).
OR
 - If the initial suspension period was less than 10 days, request that the period of suspension be extended to 10 days **AND** apply for a further behavioural response (this **MUST** occur within five days of the initial suspension being imposed). This can only occur where additional information is received that was not available at the time of the initial suspension being applied. The principal **MUST** contact the student's parent/carer to inform them of the intention to submit an application for a further behavioural response.

Further behavioural responses to unacceptable behaviour

9. The principal **MUST** have followed Point 8 for this process to apply.
10. Before the end of the student's 10-day suspension imposed by the principal, the relevant authority will review the request for a further behavioural response.
11. Before approving or rejecting any further behavioural response request, the relevant authority **MUST** ensure that a comment from the school social worker or psychologist has been recorded in SSS.
12. A Student Support Leader or the Director of Student Support *may*:
 - **further suspend** the student from attending the school for a period not exceeding 10 days; or
 - **exclude** the student from attending the school for a period exceeding 10 days; or
 - reject the request for further behavioural response; or
 - recommend or apply an alternative response.The Deputy Secretary Learning *may*:
 - **expel** the student from the school; or
 - **expel and Prohibit** the student from enrolling at a specified State school/s or at any State school; or
 - reject the request for further behavioural response; or
 - apply an alternative response.
13. The relevant authority (from Point 12 above) **MUST** issue a letter which is to be sent by Priority Mail to the parent/carer or independent student with their decision on the request for further behavioural response. A copy of this letter **MUST** be sent to the principal.
14. The principal **MUST** ensure that the student has been provided with Educational Instruction for periods of further suspension or exclusion.
15. If a further suspension/exclusion is applied, the school and student **MUST** participate in a re-entry conference to form a mutually agreed plan for the student's re-entry to school. Parents or carers should be invited to attend.

When considering whether to apply a behavioural response consideration will be given to how often the unacceptable behaviour occurs, its duration and any other patterns relevant to the unacceptable behaviour.

Suspension, further suspension and exclusion result in forced disengagement from the school environment. Alternative educational instruction will be made available for the student by the principal during a period of suspension, further suspension or exclusion to ensure continued learning and engagement, and may provide the student with an opportunity to reflect on the unacceptable behaviour.

A re-entry to school process will follow a period of suspension, further suspension or exclusion to support the student to build and repair relationships that have been affected by their behaviour and develop any strategies that may be necessary to support the student to re-engage in learning.

The re-entry conference is an opportunity for the student to reflect on their behaviour in the context of the school's expectations and values. Parents or carers will be invited to participate in the re-entry process.

6 Detention and in-school suspension

6.1 Detention Requirements

The principal or teaching staff may determine that a detention is an appropriate response to unacceptable behaviour.

Detention may be applied by a principal or teaching staff.

6.1.1 Considerations

When applying a detention, the following should be taken into consideration:

- that detention is an opportunity for the student to reflect on their behaviour, how it has affected others, and what they can do to repair relationships with those involved
- that detention should be applied to the student/s who have demonstrated unacceptable behaviour (The administration of class or group detentions or sanctions is not preferred classroom management practice.)
- the attitude of the student and the effectiveness of detention as a response
- the nature of the detention space (should be conducive to reflection by the student on their behaviour but should not be punitive or so public that it calls attention to the student)
- transport arrangements for the student to or from the school or afterschool activity
- undue hardship on the parent or carer (eg parent who does not drive may be unable to collect the student if the detention is outside school hours)
- the appropriateness of the length, timing, and method of detention
- whether the response is proportionate to the unacceptable behaviour.

6.1.2 Conducting detention

The time spent in detention is an opportunity (with staff support) for the student to undertake learning activities, reflect upon the impact their behaviour had on others, and to consider things that they can do to make things right and what strategies they could use to prevent this behaviour from occurring in future.

Students in detention MUST be readily observable and supervised by a member of the teaching staff.

Detention may occur during recess or at lunch time. Students who have a detention during a break will be given an opportunity to have something to eat.

6.1.3 Contact with parent/s or carer/s

If a student has received a detention, in most cases the principal or teacher will contact the student's parent or carer to discuss the behaviour that led to this response and any steps that may need to be taken to support respectful behaviour in future.

Parents or carers **MUST** always be notified in advance if a detention is to occur outside of regular school hours.

6.2 In-school suspension requirements

In some cases, the principal may determine that an in-school suspension is appropriate.

An in-school (sometimes called internal) suspension is the withdrawal of a student from their regular class/classes for a period of time, determined by the principal.

In-school suspension should only be applied by the principal or senior teaching staff on behalf of the principal.

6.2.1 Considerations

When applying an in-school suspension, the following should be taken into consideration:

- that in-school suspension is an opportunity for the student to reflect on their behaviour, how it has affected others, and what they can do to repair relationships with those involved
- the attitude of the student and the effectiveness of an in-school suspension as a response
- the nature of the in-school suspension space (should be conducive to reflection by the student on their behaviour but should not be punitive or so public that it calls attention to the student)
- the appropriateness of the length of the in-school suspension
- whether the response is proportionate to the unacceptable behaviour.

6.2.2 Conducting suspension

The in-school suspension is an opportunity (with staff support) for the student to reflect upon the impact their behaviour has had on others, to determine what steps they can take to make things right and to develop strategies to prevent the behaviour from occurring in future.

Students in in-school suspension **MUST** be readily observable and supervised by a member of the teaching staff and be provided with school work to complete that is similar to the work being completed in their regular class (where practical).

The student's teacher/s will supply work for the student to complete that is as close as possible to the work being completed in class; however, this may not always be possible (eg written tasks may be supplied when the class is doing sport in physical education).

6.2.3 Contact with parents or carers

Parents or carers **MUST** be notified if an in-school suspension is applied.

If a student has received an in-school suspension, the principal or their delegate will attempt to contact the parent or carer by phone. If they are unable to reach them by phone they will use text message, email or a note home to ensure that parents or carers are aware that their child has received an in-school suspension and understand the circumstances that led to the in-school suspension.

Parents and carers will be invited to work with the school to develop strategies to prevent the behaviour from occurring in future.

6.2.4 Record keeping and approvals

In-school suspensions should be recorded but are not to be recorded as a suspension in SSS as the student remains at the school.

7 Suspension

Principals **MUST** not consecutively impose suspensions in response to the same instance of unacceptable behaviour. This is known as a 'rolling suspension' and is contrary to the Act. If a student behaves unacceptably on the day that they return to school from a suspension and the process and requirements in the [Department for Education, Children and Young People Student Behaviour Management Policy](#) section on responding to unacceptable behaviour of students have been followed, a principal *may* determine that another suspension is necessary.

A part-time student *may* only be suspended for a maximum of two weeks, irrespective of whether that student is to only attend for less than 10 days across that two-week period.

A period of suspension *may* be amended in SSS within five days of being issued, only where additional information is received that was not available at the time of the initial suspension being applied and to allow an application to be made for a further behavioural response (ie further suspension, exclusion, expulsion or prohibition). The principal **MUST** contact the student's parent or carer to inform them of the intention to apply for application of a further behavioural response.

Periods of suspension should be seen as a continuum, with the more serious instances of unacceptable behaviour incurring a 10-day suspension, and the most serious instances of unacceptable behaviour being referred to the relevant authority for a period of further suspension (up to 10 more days), exclusion, expulsion or prohibition.

If a principal is of the view that an incident of unacceptable behaviour requires a behavioural response beyond a 10-day suspension refer to [8.3 Further Suspension Requirements](#).

Where a student has been suspended for more than five days, the school is encouraged to make contact with the student during the period of suspension in an effort to repair the relationship and support the re-engagement of the student.

7.1 Immediate VS non-urgent suspensions

Immediate suspension imposed by a principal

- A principal **MUST** only immediately suspend a student where the principal determines that:
 - a student has behaved or is behaving in an unacceptable manner in accordance with the Department for Education, Children and Young People's Student Behaviour Management Policy
 - the behaviour posed or poses a risk to the health or safety of another school student, a teacher or another person at the school
 - that risk may be removed only by the immediate removal of the student from the school.
- Where each requirement is met the principal *may* immediately suspend the student for a period of up to 10 school days, as the principal considers appropriate.
- Under these circumstances, the school **MUST** provide supervision until the student can be collected or until the end of the school day.

Non-urgent suspension imposed by a principal

- Non-urgent suspensions may be applied if the principal determines that:
 - the Department for Education, Children and Young People's Student Behaviour Management Policy has been complied with
 - compliance with that Policy has not been effective in dealing with the unacceptable behaviour.
- The principal may suspend the student from the school for a period of up to 10 school days, as the principal considers appropriate.

7.2 Monitoring of suspension data

Upon a student incurring 15 days of suspension or three instances of suspension in a single year the Director of Student Support will receive an alert notification from the SSS.

SSS does not allow suspensions to be applied across school terms. If a principal wishes to apply a suspension across school terms the principal **MUST** discuss this with the Director of Student Support and gain approval before making a request to Education Performance and Review (EPR).

The Director of Student Support or a Student Support Leader **may** also generate an Educational Information Warehouse and Portal (edi) report showing which students have had more than 15 days suspension/three or more suspensions during the year.

The Director of Student Support or a Student Support Leader **may** consider the suspension trends of the student and of the school before discussing the matter with the school and address any underlying issues for the student or school.

The Director of Student Support and the Student Support Leaders **MUST** monitor and track suspension data for their schools and make contact with principals where appropriate.

7.3 Further suspension requirements

If a principal is of the view that an incident of unacceptable behaviour requires a further period of suspension the principal **MUST** select the maximum suspension period of two weeks **and** select a further suspension in the system for consideration by the Student Support Leaders or the Director of Student Support. This can be done at either the time the suspension is applied, or later amended in SSS (up to day five after the start of the suspension).

Requests for approval of further suspension will be forwarded to the Student Support Leaders and the Director of Student Support. All relevant information, including the requested timeframes for further suspension, details of previous unacceptable behaviour and the incident which led to suspension, **MUST** be recorded in SSS.

The Director of Student Support or a Student Support Leader **MUST** advise the parent/carer of the student of the outcome in writing. A copy of this letter **MUST** be provided to the principal.

7.4 Process for applying a further suspension

Before the end of the student's suspension period a Student Support Leader will review the request made by a principal for a further period of suspension (or exclusion) and consider:

- suspending the student from attending the school for a further period of up to 10 days
- applying an alternative period of further suspension for up to 10 days
- excluding the student from school for more than 10 days

- rejecting the application for further suspension and directing that the student return to school at the end of the suspension.

A further period of suspension MUST be applied where additional time is required to:

- investigate the unacceptable behaviour
- allow an external investigation to be conducted (eg by Police)
- make arrangements for the student's return to school (eg to put appropriate supports in place, or to develop a Learning Plan or Risk Management Strategy).

Where a period of further suspension is applied a Student Support Leader **may**:

- negotiate with the principal regarding the re-entry of the student
- provide an opportunity for the student and the parent/carer to be consulted
- establish a network of teachers, support staff, or officers from other agencies for wider discussion and risk management with a focus on educational outcomes
- coordinate with the school principal to determine the educational instruction for the period of the further period of suspension.

8 Exclusion

8.1 Exclusion requirements

If a principal is of the view that an incident of unacceptable behaviour requires an exclusion the principal MUST select the maximum suspension period of two weeks and select exclusion in the system for consideration by the Student Support Leaders or the Director of Student Support. This can be done at either the time the suspension is applied, or later amended in SSS (up to day five after the start of the suspension).

An exclusion MUST not exceed the end of the term in which the student is suspended, unless the Director of Student Support deems there to be exceptional circumstances.

Requests for approval of exclusion will be forwarded to the Student Support Leaders and the Director of Student Support. All relevant information including the requested timeframes for exclusion, details of previous unacceptable behaviour and the incident which led to suspension MUST be recorded in SSS.

The Director of Student Support or Student Support Leaders MUST advise the parent or carer of the student of the outcome in writing. A copy of this letter MUST be provided to the principal.

8.2 Process for applying an exclusion

A principal **may** refer the matter of an exclusion to the Director of Student Support when the following has occurred:

- The principal has complied with the school's policy on managing behaviour.
- The response has not been effective in dealing with the unacceptable behaviour.
- The principal believes the unacceptable behaviour of the student justifies exclusion from the school for a period of more than 10 days.

Before the end of the student's suspension, a Student Support Leader or the Director of Student Support will review the exclusion request. The Director of Student Support or a Student Support Leader **may** then:

- exclude a student from attendance at a school for more than 10 days
- apply an alternative period of exclusion to that requested by the principal
- approve a period of further suspension for a maximum of 10 days only
- reject the request for exclusion and direct that the student return to school at the end of the suspension.

Where the student is excluded, the Director of Student Support or a Student Support Leader may:

- negotiate with the principal regarding the student's re-entry
- provide an opportunity for the student and the parent or carer to be consulted
- establish a network of teachers, support staff, or officers from other agencies for wider discussion and risk management with a focus on educational outcomes
- determine the educational instruction for the period of the exclusion.

9 Expulsion and prohibition

If the principal or the Director of Student Support believe that the unacceptable behaviour is so serious that expulsion or prohibition may be more appropriate they should refer the matter to the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People. For more information on expulsion or prohibition from State schools, see [Appendix 2 Expulsion and Prohibition](#).

10 Educational instruction

Principals MUST provide students who have been suspended, further suspended or excluded with appropriate educational instruction until they return to school.

In determining appropriate educational instruction for the student, a principal or teacher (in the case of suspension, further suspension and exclusion) and the Student Support Leaders, Director of Student Support, or the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People (in the case of expulsion and prohibition) may consider the appropriate educational instruction checklist ([Appendix 1](#)).

Educational instruction can be a learning task able to be independently completed by the student, or a reflective piece relevant to the unacceptable behaviour demonstrated. The type of educational instruction provided will depend on the needs of the student and the period of suspension, exclusion, expulsion, or prohibition.

The educational instruction may be an activity or program and may include:

- for a suspension of five days or fewer:
 - the completion of a re-entry / reflective piece focussing on the unacceptable behaviour that resulted in the suspension with questions framed around restorative processes to be reviewed on re-entry (eg 'What were you thinking? Who did your behaviour impact? What are other ways you could have dealt with the issue? What support do you need from your school or family to better manage your behaviour?')
 - worksheets that can be completed independently
 - online programs such as Mathletics and Reading Eggs
 - material that would usually be provided to a student as homework or independently completed as classroom work.
- for a suspension of six days or more (including a period of further suspension, exclusion, or expulsion):
 - a variety of work in a bid to maintain the student's engagement
 - a referral to a re-engagement program such as Radar School (particularly where a period of further suspension is imposed) and all school-based programs have been considered and exhausted.
- Useful educational instruction resources/activities can be sourced from:
 - [Canvas](#)
 - [Reading Eggs](#)
 - [Mathletics](#)
 - [Lexia](#)
 - [StudyLadder](#)

- [Scootle](#)
- [Spellodrome](#).

The principal will arrange for review of the educational instruction as part of the re-entry process.

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

11 Re-entry to school

Strategies employed upon re-entry MUST be tailored to the individual, staff and school requirements. Documented support strategies *may* include development of a Learning Plan, school psychologist/social worker referral, restorative conferences, referral to an external agency or support staff, risk management plan for re-entry, or a plan for future unacceptable behaviour.

The re-entry process will also provide an opportunity for the review of educational instruction provided to the student during the period of suspension and should provide the student with an opportunity to reflect on their unacceptable behaviour.

The principal will organise a re-entry conference with the student before or on the day that the student returns to school. The student's parent or carer **will** be invited to participate in the re-entry conference, unless the student is an independent student.

Students will participate in the re-entry conference.

Parents and carers are encouraged to work collaboratively with the school to address a student's unacceptable behaviour and participate in strategies to support a student's re-entry to school, including attending the student's re-entry conference.

The re-entry conference is an opportunity for the student to reflect on their behaviour in the context of the school's expectations and values. Parents or carers will be invited to participate in the re-entry process.

12 Bullying

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12.1 Early intervention

Early intervention involves the targeting of known or expected risk situations, specific risk factors, or groups and individuals who are at an increased risk of being involved in bullying.

In school contexts that have high racial diversity, students with social-emotional disadvantages, community conflict issues, student mental health issues and students with disabilities, schools should plan and develop structures and programs to counter these risk factors.

Whole-school approaches to early intervention and prevention may include:

- embedding school values
- social and emotional learning
- whole-school programs (eg Respectful Relationships, Positive Behaviour for Learning, eSmart Schools)
- bullying prevention through the curriculum (eg anti-bullying content, cybersafety education, social and emotional learning).

Early intervention strategies may include:

- pastoral care and risk-management systems (eg teachers responsible for pastoral care)
- embedding of bullying, cyberbullying and cyber safety learning across the curriculum
- strategies for early intervention with individuals (eg support from specialist staff, individual behaviour plans)
- strategies for early intervention with groups of students (eg targeted delivery of social and emotional learning).

12.2 Responsibilities

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

Preventing and responding to bullying, including cyberbullying, is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff and students, as well as parents/carers and the wider school community. All members of a school can contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Whole-school approaches to bullying involve the development of a safe and supportive learning environment and a positive and respectful school culture that prevents bullying from occurring.

Schools have a responsibility to support students involved in bullying, including cyberbullying, which is affecting a student's learning and/or wellbeing at school, even when the unacceptable behaviour has occurred off school campus and/or outside of school hours.

School Leaders have a responsibility to:

- value diversity and appreciate the rich learning opportunities it brings to school life
- work with their school community to challenge bias and maintain inclusive school cultures
- implement DECYP's Student Behaviour Management Policy
- consistently reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable
- develop a whole-school approach that is multi-faceted rather than focused on a single component

- promote awareness of bullying in the school community and communicate regularly using consistent language
- ensure teachers have effective classroom supports and resources
- promote a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students, staff and families
- actively engage with resources to develop and review whole school practices aimed at promoting respectful schools
- provide opportunities for developing social and emotional learning
- reinforce effective communication strategies and problem-solving skills for staff, students and families
- minimise the risk from all types of harm
- use data to inform whole-of-school response.

The annual Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey provides schools with critical data in the voice of students on bullying (physical; verbal; social) and School Climate (culture of respect).

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide a model of appropriate behaviour and encourage empathy and respect
- have strategies to deal with bullies and bullying
- respect, listen and understand students' feelings
- appreciate that individual students will respond and act differently to bullying
- understand that bullying behaviour arises from a power imbalance leading to distrust, fear, misunderstanding, lack of knowledge or jealousy
- encourage students to share problems and get helpful advice from their peers
- teach students ways to effectively respond to bullying behaviour
- explicitly teach students about healthy and unhealthy relationships
- teach students to understand that they have a responsibility to help fix bullying behaviours
- provide prompt language to empower students to say something supportive to someone being bullied and something to prevent someone using bullying behaviours
- teach students about not behaving in ways that make bullying problems worse.

12.3 Responding to bullying

When responding to bullying behaviour, schools should aim to:

- engage students as part of the solution to develop a plan of action/strategies to prevent the behaviour from occurring in the future
- restore the relationships and a positive learning environment for all students
- apply the processes of the whole-school approach to Respectful Behaviour.

Responding effectively when students have been impacted by bullying behaviour is vital.

Schools should have strategies for intervening when bullying has occurred, including processes for students, parents and staff to report bullying that include:

- a problem-solving process for those involved in the bullying
- information to support parents and relevant staff
- monitoring and referring students to other services where necessary.

The steps below outline the process for schools to follow in preventing and responding to bullying.

12.3.1 Be alert to the signs

There are a large number of signs that may indicate a student may be the target of or involved in bullying behaviour. These include:

- changes in personality
- appearing lonelier or distressed
- unexpected changes in friendship groups
- less interaction with other students at school
- peer rejection
- increase in absenteeism
- decline in physical health
- decline in academic achievement.

If school staff become aware of any of these signs they should check in with the student.

12.3.2 Identify concerns

- **Ensure all students are safe, both physically and emotionally:**

Ensure there are no immediate safety risks for any of the parties involved, including the student impacted, the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour and any bystanders. If there are immediate safety risks for the student being bullied, contact the appropriate support and inform key leadership within the school.

- **Speak to all students involved (including the student impacted by the behaviour, the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour and any bystanders):**

Students' views on why bullying is happening can suggest ways the school can respond.

School staff should:

- provide a safe and quiet place for students to talk
- provide reassurance and support
- allow students to share their experience without interruption and provide the opportunity to describe/explain their behaviours
- avoid the terms 'bully' or 'victim' and instead talk about the behaviour of everyone involved, including bystanders
- not dismiss concerns or place blame.

- **Make contact with parent/carer:**

Advise the parents or carers of students involved that the school is reviewing the situation and provide supporting information as appropriate (eg Student Behaviour Fact Sheet).

- **Record Key information:**

Detailed notes of all discussions should be taken and a record **MUST** be entered into SSS. Comprehensive recording of information in the Student Support System (SSS) underpins a whole-school approach to respectful behaviour and relationships.

School staff should record the facts including who, what, where, when, how and why. Outcomes, parent or carer contact and early intervention strategies should be recorded. In recording information in SSS, notes should:

- be clear
- be brief and concise
- be precise and accurate
- be specific
- be complete
- be timely
- describe relevant observed behaviours without having personal judgement or interpretation
- document users' verbal statements and questions without personal judgment or interpretation
- record objective observations
- confirm conclusions and decisions through the evidence and facts presented.

12.3.3 Make further inquiries into the behaviour

Allegations of bullying should be investigated as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed promptly.

- **Speak to relevant staff, including School Support and Wellbeing Lead, school psychologist, grade co-ordinator, Learning Division:**

A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

- **Review SSS for any previous reports or records for students involved.**
- **Determine whether bullying behaviour has occurred:**

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

Cyberbullying is online bullying of a person or group. Cyberbullying can spread fast and be hard to delete.

	What is Bullying	What is not Bullying
Social/ relational	Ostracising, making up or spreading rumours, social exclusion, rejection, purposeful misleading/lying to, sharing others personal information	Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, 'ganging-up', unwanted physical or sexual touching, personal property damage and assault using objects	Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection

Emotional/ Psychological	Stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, threatening gestures, manipulation	One-off acts of meanness or spite
Verbal	Put downs, name-calling, swearing, nasty notes and negative remarks about race, culture, family circumstances, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, medical conditions, etc	Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence
Cyber	Sending mean texts, pranking someone's mobile phone, hacking into someone's gaming or social networking profile, pretending to be someone else to spread hurtful messages online	Ghosting; one-off instances of hate speech

Note - While the behaviours listed in the right column would not be considered bullying because they do not involve deliberate and repeated harm and a power imbalance they may need to be addressed by the school.

If it is determined that bullying has occurred, schools must consider a developmentally appropriate behaviour management response. See Section 3 – Applying Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour.

The following factors should be considered when determining the most appropriate response:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour has/have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates/demonstrate insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive for the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

- **Contact the appropriate support to develop necessary plans:**

School Support and Wellbeing Team Lead

Supports the planning and implementing school strategies and processes that support the wellbeing of all students, with a particular focus on students with diverse and complex needs requiring coordinated support. Ensure the School Support and Wellbeing Team Lead is informed and specialist support has been offered to perpetrators and victims.

Inclusive Practice Team (IPT)

The Inclusive Practice Team provides coaching and mentoring support for schools in:

- developing and maintaining inclusive learning cultures
- understanding and valuing of diversity (school climate and culture)
- developing the plan of action to support the students involved (this may include Risk Management Planning).

Intensive Student Support Co-ordinator

Provides oversight, advice, and support to school leaders regarding legislative and policy requirements, inclusive practice and student support, safety, and wellbeing matters.

Professional Support Staff

Professional Support Staff support the emotional wellbeing and overall development of students. This includes support teachers, school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, social workers and chaplains. Professional Support Staff assist schools to identify and support specific needs (eg emotional, developmental) and refer to other professional help when required.

- **Plans and practices that may be considered include the following:**

Risk Management Plan

Leaders and educators understand duty of care to all students and ensure a risk management plan is in place to protect all students should the need arise.

Restorative Practice

The Restorative Practice process assists teachers, students and families to build, maintain and restore relationships using a 'no blame' approach. It also helps build capacity to enable students to self-regulate behaviour and contributes to the improvement of learning outcomes.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

A framework which supports the social and academic learning of all students. It is a decision-making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioural practices for improving learning and behaviour outcomes for all students.

- **Engage students as part of the solution to develop a plan of action/strategies to prevent the behaviour from occurring in the future:**

Schools should work with the student/s concerned to develop strategies they believe will help address the situation. This may include referring the student to professional support staff and developing strategies for restoring and building relationships.

If appropriate, involve the parents and other caregivers in developing a plan of action.

12.3.4 Follow up and monitor

- **Complete all actions agreed with student and parent within agreed timeframes.**

- **Continue to check in with students on a regular basis until concerns have mitigated:**

Check-ins should include a discussion on what has changed, improved or worsened and explore other options for strengthening student wellbeing or safety.

- **Review and update response plans as appropriate:**

Give consideration to whether a different or more/less intensive response is required.

- **Monitor the wellbeing of all students involved:**

If situations are long standing, bullying can require a sustained effort to prevent ongoing incidents.

Reviews should be undertaken to check in with all students impacted by bullying. Reviews ensure the school's efforts have not caused other problems or created a problem elsewhere.

The ongoing behaviour of the students involved should be monitored for an appropriate time.

- **Apply the processes of the whole school approach to Respectful Behaviour:**

Refer to page 46 of the [Respectful Schools Respectful Behaviour](#) resource.

- **Incorporate student voice and agency:**

The annual [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey \(SWES\)](#) provides schools with critical data in the voice of students on bullying (physical; verbal; social) and School Climate (culture of respect).

The Child and Student Wellbeing Unit can provide schools with Get Going packs, which contain resources to unpack school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey data to facilitate student thinking and action.

12.3.5 Criminal Offence

Severe cases of bullying or cyberbullying may justify a criminal justice response owing to the very serious harm that bullying can cause. If the Principal deems that a case requires progression through the criminal justice system, the Department's [Legal Services](#) team should be contacted immediately.

12.4 Complaints handling

In the event that a student, parent or carer believes a matter is not being dealt with effectively the [Enquiries and Complaints Management Procedure](#) should be followed.

12.5 Useful resources for schools, parents and students

Respectful Schools Respectful Behaviour	Resource for school leaders to support all learners in all school communities to build respectful, safe and inclusive learning environments.
Bullying No Way!	Supporting school communities with evidence-informed resources and activities for a proactive approach to bullying education and prevention.
The Office of the eSafety Commissioner	The eSafety Commissioner is responsible for promoting online safety for all Australians.
Kids Helpline	Counselling for students, advice and articles for parents and free video-link sessions (wellbeing, personal safety, cybersafety etc.) for primary schools run by a counsellor with content tailored for your class.
Think U Know	Free, evidence-based cyber safety program that provides presentations to parents/carers, teachers and students.
Lawstuff	Legal information on bullying and cyberbullying.
Student Wellbeing Hub	Advice about important topics and resources to help make your child's school experience a positive one.
iParent	Where you can learn about the digital environment and how to help your child have safe and enjoyable online experiences.

Alannah and Madeline Foundation (DoE staff only)	Our key objectives are to care for children who have experienced or witnessed serious violence, reduce the incidence of bullying, cyber bullying and other cyber risks, and advocate for the safety and wellbeing of children.
The Carly Ryan Foundation (DoE staff only)	The Carly Ryan Foundation is a certified online safety program provider under the Office of the eSafety Commissioner's certification scheme.
Cyberparent web app	Tool for parents which encourages safe and healthy internet use in Australian homes.

13 Related policies

[Attendance Policy](#)

[Personal Information Protection and Your Right to Information Policy](#)

[Student Behaviour Management Policy](#)

14 Related procedures

[Attendance Process](#)

[Respectful School Volunteer and Visitor Behaviour Procedure](#)

[Student Engagement Procedures](#)

15 Supporting information/tools

[Enrolment Process](#)

[Education Act - Frequently Asked Questions for Parents](#)

[Guide for Inclusive Practice](#)

[Guide to placement of support materials for students in the Student Support System](#)

[National Safe Schools Framework](#)

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

[Parent Fact Sheet Online Safety](#)

[Parent Fact Sheet Staying Safe](#)

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

[Protective Practices for Staff with Students](#)

[Respectful Schools, Respectful Behaviour](#)

[School-wide Positive Behaviour Support](#)

[Student Support System \(SSS\) User Guide and Guides to help use SSS for disciplinary sanctions](#)

[Trauma Informed Practice – Good Teaching Guide](#)

16 Definitions

Act

Means the *Education Act 2016* unless specified otherwise.

Bullying

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

Behavioural response

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

Cyberbullying

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

Detention

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

Discrimination

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

Exclusion

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

Expulsion

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

Harassment

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

Independent students

Students under 18, but for legal or other reasons are considered to be an Independent Student by Centrelink.

In-school suspension

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

Parent or carer

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

Principal

The person in charge of a school or their delegate.

Prohibition

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

Responsibilities: Must and May

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

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

Restorative practices

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

School activity (or event)

School-endorsed activities for their students that are held:

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

School Association

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

School Association Committee

Represents the School Association. It undertakes administrative and decision-making activities on behalf of the Association.

School Days

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

Secretary

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

Social Media

Online services and locations that provide a way for people to connect and share content and to participate in conversations. They are online websites where a user can create a profile and build a personal network of online friends.

Student Support System (SSS)

Student Support System (SSS) is a reporting and data entry system designed as an electronic file for all student supports. Information is visible to all teachers in the school in which the student is enrolled.

Suspension

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

17 Legislation

Education Act 2016

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX I – DETERMINING APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION FOR A STUDENT CHECKLIST

When determining appropriate educational instruction for a student who has been suspended, expelled, excluded or prohibited the principal or representative from the Learning Division should consider the following:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	the developmental needs of the student
<input type="checkbox"/>	whether the student can undertake self-directed learning
<input type="checkbox"/>	whether resources are required for the student to complete the educational instruction (eg the internet) and whether the student has access to these resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	whether the education activity will engage the student in a meaningful way
<input type="checkbox"/>	whether the educational instruction is appropriate taking into consideration the period of suspension, expulsion, exclusion or prohibition
<input type="checkbox"/>	the capacity of a parent or carer to support and supervise the student to complete the educational instruction.

APPENDIX 2 – EXPULSION AND PROHIBITION

When applying for expulsion or prohibition a principal MUST provide the relevant authority with a report with the following information in their application, where that information is not already recorded on SSS:

- details of the most recent instance of unacceptable behaviour and the school's response
- a detailed history of incidents of unacceptable behaviour at school (including dates and the response of the school to the unacceptable behaviour)
- details of any support that the student has received (eg school social worker/psychologist, private psychologist)
- background information on the student's home life/personal circumstances
- suspension and attendance data
- details of any external agency involvement (eg Child Safety, Police).

EXPULSION REQUIREMENTS

Expulsion is a response to a student's unacceptable behaviour in extreme circumstances. Expulsion may occur at a point where the relationship between the student and school is irreparably damaged and is unlikely to be re-built or repaired to allow the student to positively participate in the school's learning environment.

- Expulsion is a response to unacceptable behaviour that MUST only be sought when other restorative practices have been exhausted by the school.
- The student MUST continue to have an active enrolment until alternative enrolment is arranged.
- The Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People MUST advise the parent or carer of the student of the outcome in writing. A copy of this letter MUST be provided to the principal.

PROCESS FOR APPLYING FOR AN EXPULSION

- A principal may apply for expulsion by referring a matter to the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People when:
 - the principal has complied with the school's Policy on managing behaviour
 - the response has not been effective in dealing with the unacceptable behaviour
 - the principal believes the unacceptable behaviour of the student justifies expulsion from the school.
- The Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People will consider the application for expulsion and:
 - consult with the principal
 - provide an opportunity for the student and the student's parent or carer to be consulted
 - establish a network of teachers, support staff, officers from other agencies for wider discussion and risk management with a focus on educational outcomes for the student.
- After consideration and consultation regarding the application for expulsion, the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People may:
 - reject the application for expulsion and direct that the student re-enter the school after the period of suspension
 - accept the recommendation for expulsion and negotiate with the principal for enrolment at another State school

- accept the recommendation for expulsion and organise a flexible educational program for the student
- apply an alternative behavioural response to that requested by the principal (further suspension, exclusion or prohibition).

PROHIBITION REQUIREMENTS

- Prohibition removes the right of a child or young person to enrol at a State school or the State school system and **MUST** be exercised only as a last resort.
- Prohibition **may** be sought by the school principal, and applied by the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People when the student has acted in a manner which constitutes an unacceptable continued risk to the safety or wellbeing of staff or students at a State school, or has acted illegally or has been found guilty of a serious criminal offence that impinges on their ability to attend a State school.
- Principals **MUST** refuse to admit and enrol any student who has been prohibited. Exceptions can be made to ensure all students are able to access education (eg Ashley School, Tasmanian eSchool). If the principal is unsure of the student's position they should contact Learning Services.
- If the decision to prohibit a student to enrol at a State school is made the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People **MUST** inform the parent or carer in writing of the decision and provide a copy to the principal.

PROCESS FOR APPLYING A PROHIBITION

- When making a request for prohibition, a principal **MUST**:
 - submit the request for prohibition which will be forwarded to the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People
 - include with the request a recommendation made that prohibition from a particular Tasmanian State school or all Tasmanian State schools occur
 - ensure that the student continues to have an active enrolment until alternative enrolment is arranged.
- Upon receiving the request for prohibition, the Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People **may**:
 - reject the application for prohibition and direct that the student re-enter the same school after the period of suspension
 - reject the application for prohibition and direct that the student enters an alternative school, after the period of suspension
 - prohibit the student from a State school or the State school system
 - apply an alternative behavioural response to that requested by the principal (further suspension, exclusion or expulsion).

APPENDIX 3 – RIGHT TO REVIEW

- A parent or carer or the student (including independent students) may apply in writing for a review, or periodic review of a further suspension, exclusion, expulsion or prohibition decision.
- The application for review should ask for review and/or revocation of the behavioural response (eg exclusion) that was imposed.
- Upon receiving the Application for Review, the relevant authority may agree, or refuse to, conduct a review. The relevant authority will contact the person requesting the review in writing to inform them of whether or not they will conduct a review/periodic review.
- If the relevant authority decides to conduct a periodic review it is to occur no more than once per month.

Behavioural response	Applications for review or revocation will be forwarded to:
Further suspension	Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People
Exclusion	Deputy Secretary for Children and Young People
Expulsion	Deputy Secretary for Development and Support Deputy Secretary for Continuous Improvement and Evaluation Deputy Secretary for Business Operations and Support
Prohibition	Secretary

SUSPENSION/EXCLUSION

- Applications for review or revocation of a further suspension/exclusion decision should be made in writing using the relevant [Application for Review or Revocation of Exclusion](#) or [Application for Review or Revocation of Further Period of Suspension](#).
- A decision on the review of a student's exclusion will be provided to the parent/carer (with a copy to the principal) within five school days from when the relevant authority receives the application for review.

EXPULSION

- Applications for review or revocation of an expulsion decision should be made in writing using the [Application for Review or Revocation of Expulsion](#).
- A decision on the review of a student's expulsion will be provided to the parent/carer (with a copy to the principal) within ten school days from when the relevant authority receives the application for review.

PROHIBITION

- Applications for review or revocation of an expulsion and prohibition decision should be made in writing using the [Application for Review or Revocation of Prohibition](#).

- A decision on the review of a student's expulsion and prohibition will be provided to the parent/carer (with a copy to the principal) within ten school days from when the relevant authority receives the application for review.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Staff should be aware that all documentation regarding responses to student behaviour *may* be obtained by the child's parent or carer under the [Right to Information Act 2009](#) or [Personal Information Protection Act 2004](#). See Personal Information Protection and Your Right to Information [policies](#).
- Parents and carers and/or independent students have the right to appeal against the exclusion, expulsion, or prohibition process (or any part of it) through the Ombudsman, or by application to the Magistrates Court for a decision to expel and prohibit a student from enrolling at a specified State school or at any State school.
- International students *may* appeal decisions via the [appeals process](#) for international students enrolled in a State school.

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

Contact: Strategic Policy and Projects

Last significant review: 30 July 2018

Review due: 23 October 2023

This document replaces: Respectful Student Behaviour Policy