



Coominya State School

Student Code of Conduct 2020-2023

Every student succeeding

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

Queensland Department of Education
State Schools Strategy 2019-2023

Purpose

Coominya State School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for all students, staff, parents and visitors.

This *Student Code of Conduct* sets out the responsibilities and processes we use in our school to promote a productive, effective approach to discipline.

Its purpose to communicate expectations and procedures to the whole school community. It priorities teaching and learning, with the express purpose that all students experience success and staff enjoy a safe workplace.

Contact Information

Postal address: c/c Coominya PO, COOMINYA, Q 4311

Phone: 07 5426 5111

Email: principal@coominyass.eq.edu.au

School website address: <https://coominyass.eq.edu.au>

Contact Person: Richard Amos (Principal)

Endorsement

Principal Name: Richard Amos

Principal Signature:



Date: 09.12.2020

P/C President and-or School
Council Chair Name: Anna Arvoll

P/C President and-or School
Council Chair Signature:

Date:

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Consultation

School Survey

Parents and staff were given an opportunity to provide input into this document. Below is a summary of a survey that was conducted.

Respondent's length of association with school:

Up to 1 year	5
Up to 4 years	8
More than 4 years	5

Positives

- Following through on negative behaviour and rewarding good behaviour
- Buddy room
- Reward days
- Keeping parents informed through newsletters and Facebook
- Good system
- Congratulations Coominya State School staff on encouraging, guiding, and taking an interest in the generation moulding the future

Improvements

Some unhelpful, inaccurate and derogatory comments are not recorded here.

- Implement buddy room earlier
- Poorly behaved students receive Casey rewards
- School too soft on poor behaviour
- School expects me as a parent to solve problem
- Parents could be better informed about the program
- Inconsistency in implementation
- Consistency in issuing certificates e.g. all children wear uniforms should get the certificate
- Punishments not strong enough
- It's a great little school with good kind supporting staff in place.

Innovations/Different

- Use fewer categories for Caseys
- Well children gain a badge which they lose if they misbehave and need to earn it back
- Children lose privileges for whole year not just term
- Somehow create an online platform where parents and school could communicate directly about the kids behaviour at home and at school. Together the school and parents could set tasks, goals and behavioural expectations for the kids to be followed up at all times based on what was observed daily, weekly, monthly. Like an online behavioural report card where actions could be set faster and more accurately.
- Stronger responses during playtime, segregate poorly behaved children
- Harsher consequences – lines, gardening, sweeping
- Teach children empathy
- Children to track their own behaviour in a diary
- Team building activities

Learning and Behaviour Statement

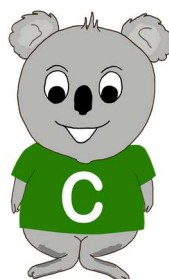
Student Wellbeing and Support Network

Coominya School engages a Guidance Officer who visits the school once a fortnight. Their role mainly focusses on the academic/learning needs of students, however their brief also includes advising and support students, parents and school staff in the area of student wellbeing.

The school also employs a chaplain for two days a week. The chaplain's role is varied but is centred on student wellbeing. The chaplain is available to support students and their parents. Contact the office or the chaplain directly, for support. The chaplain runs programs across the school to help students develop their social skills.

The school uses the resources of the Behaviour Hub to support individuals who need extra help to access their learning.

The school is seeking to upgrade its Wellbeing plan as part of implementing this plan. New programs may be adopted as part of the upgrade process.



CASEY is our school
behaviour mascot

Whole School Approach to Discipline

Coominya School's approach to school discipline is generally based on the principles of 'Positive Behaviour for Learning', although does not wholly adopt the program.

We take a 'whole school' approach assisting our students to get the most out of their learning and develop a responsible approach to the school (and wider) community.

Our approach is more than punishment and starts with teaching students about school expectations for behaviour and individual strategies for maintaining self discipline.

Our priority is for students to be fully engaged in learning and learning to take responsibility for their own learning. We seek to implement inclusive strategies to engage and support all students.

These outcomes are achieved by establishing and negotiating clear outcomes with students and are accompanied by a comprehensive reward system to support students.

The school also promotes the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.

The department's record-keeping system, OneSchool is used to record all behaviour incidents and disciplinary actions such as detentions and suspensions. OneSchool also has the facility to document extra supports for individuals such as personalised learning and support provisions.

Consideration of Individual Circumstances

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

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

Our teachers are also obliged by law, to respect and protect the privacy of individual students, so while we understand the interest of other students, staff and parents to know what punishment another student might have received, we will not disclose or discuss this information with anyone but the student's family. This applies even if the behavioural incident, such as bullying, involves your child. You can be assured that school staff take all matters, such as bullying, very seriously and will address them appropriately. We expect that parents and students will respect the privacy of other students and families.

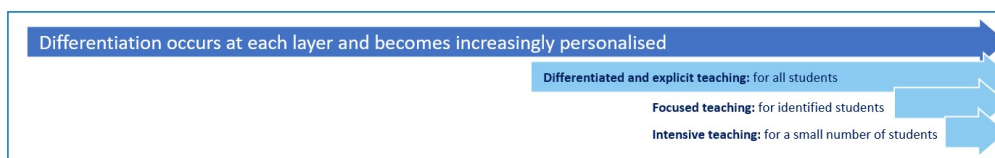
If you have concerns about the behaviour of another student at the school, or the way our staff have responded to their behaviour, please make an appointment with the principal to discuss the matter.

Differentiated and Explicit Teaching

Coominya State School 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 Coominya 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.



Differentiated and explicit teaching: Class teachers have focussed teaching episodes on the 'rule of the week'. These are delivered according to the learning and developmental needs of the students in the class.

Focused Teaching

A small percentage of students in any school or classroom may require additional support to meet behaviour expectations, even after being provided with differentiated and explicit teaching.

Focussed teaching involves revisiting key skills, using explicit and structured teaching strategies in particular aspects of a behaviour skill.

Class teachers, administration, guidance and the chaplain all offer these learning opportunities, usually to small groups, to provide support for identified students.

Class teachers monitor students receiving Focussed Teaching support to identify those who:

- no longer need support
- require intensive teaching.

Intensive Teaching

A very small percentage of students require more intensive support to achieve school behaviour expectations. Learning opportunities are provided, usually individually, to students in need of intensive support to manage their behaviour. Learning episodes are typically short but frequent with support staff using a variety of support strategies to assist the individual student. Strategies include visual aids, individual reward plans (usually negotiated with parents).

These learning opportunities are typically linked to an Individual Behaviour Plan.

Staff involved in formulating and implementing these plans include the class teacher, parents, administration, guidance, Advisory Visiting Teachers (behaviour and others) and the Chaplain. Where appropriate, outside agencies may also be involved (eg DoCS, FACC)

Legislative Delegations

Legislation

The following legislation informs the school's Student Code of Conduct. (current as of June 2020)

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

Delegations

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

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

Disciplinary Consequences

The disciplinary consequences model used at Coominya 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.

Please be aware that when there is a critical incident, staff members' priorities include keeping all children safe and de-escalating the situation. This means that there may be a delay in following through with consequences, as the immediate application of consequences can escalate some situations.

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 3 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)
- Detention

Focussed

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

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

Intensive

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

- Functional Behaviour Assessment based individual support plan
- Complex case management and review
- Stakeholder meeting with parents and external agencies including regional specialists
- Temporary removal of student property (e.g. mobile phone)
- Short term suspension (up to 10 school days)
- Long term suspension (up to 20 school days)
- Charge related suspension (student has been charged with a serious criminal offence is suspended from school until the charge has been dealt with by the relevant justice authorities)
- Suspension pending exclusion (student is suspended from school pending a decision by the Director-General or delegate (principal) about their exclusion from school)
- Exclusion (student is excluded from a particular state school site, a group of state schools or all state schools in Queensland for a defined period of time or permanently)
- Cancellation of enrolment for students older than compulsory school age who refuse to participate in the educational program provided at the school.

School Disciplinary Absences

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

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

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

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

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

Re-entry following suspension

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

It is not mandatory for the student or their parents to attend a re-entry meeting. It may be offered as a support for the student to assist in their successful re-engagement in school following suspension.

Arrangements

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

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

Structure

The structure of the re-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.

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

The school has a standalone document that extensively details school's policies on rewarding good behaviour and the steps around assisting children to manage their own behaviour.

Key messages are reproduced below, along with some of the artefacts associated with the plan. It is not reproduced in full in this document as it undergoes regular adjustments and fine-tuning. The full plan is available upon request.

- Routines and procedures are consistent across the school.
- There is a set of steps, which are posted in each room, which teachers follow to remind children of rules/expectations and consequences. These include warnings, time out and removal from the room. The steps are similar for the playground and eating areas.
- There is a reward scheme in place to promote and reward positive behaviour.
- Children are taught weekly about the rules/expectations.
- All staff are encouraged to distribute CASEY tokens to recognise positive behaviour.
- Students receive certificates when they collect an agreed number of tokens and the achievement is recorded in OneSchool.
- Certificates are accompanied by small prizes.
- Good behaviour is rewarded with a class or whole celebration at least once a term.
- There are clearly set out procedures/steps for managing unacceptable behaviour in the classroom and playground.
- Withdrawal from the class and the playground are possible consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- When children incur a particular level of consequence, parents are informed.

Certificates:

Level 1 Certificate (level one CASEY certificate.pub)



Level 2 Certificate (level two CASEY certificate.pub)



Level 3 Certificate (level three CASEY certificate.pub)



Student Booklet (My CASEY Rewards Book with extra page.docx)



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, students and visitors. This 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; and
- 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. Most items would be returned at the end of the day. Where an item is repeatedly brought to school, the item may be held for longer (e.g. end of term) or collected by a parent of the child.

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

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

* No knives of any type are allowed at school, including flick knives, ballistic knives, sheath knives, push daggers, trench knives, butterfly knives, star knives, butter knives, fruit knives or craft knives, or any item that can be used as a weapon, for example a chisel. Knives needed for school activities will be provided by the school, and the use of them will be supervised by school staff.

** 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 Coominya 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 the student's parent or guardian 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;
- may, in an emergency, search a student's property without the student's consent or the consent of the student's parents – where the student's immediately wellbeing is at risk (e.g. to access an EpiPen for an anaphylactic emergency);

- require consent from the student or the student's parent or guardian to search the person of a student (e.g. pockets or shoes). If consent is not provided by the student and a search is considered necessary, the police and the student's parents will be called to make such a determination.

Parents of students at Coominya State School should:

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

Students of Coominya State School should:

- not bring property onto school grounds or other settings used by the school (e.g. camp, sporting venues) that:
 - is prohibited according to the Coominya 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;
 - or
 - 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, Coominya State School has determined that students do not require mobile phones for learning.

Responsibilities

Upon arrival at school, students must hand in their mobile phones and other devices (e.g. tablets) to the office and collect the device at the end of the school day.

Students must not use their phones on school grounds.

Students must not use other electronic devices (brought to school) to record sound and or images on school grounds. Where such recording is required for a learning activity, the school will provide a suitable device.

On commencement at Coominya School, students are required to agree to an 'Internet Agreement', which sets out responsible use of ICT equipment – particularly when accessing the internet, and a 'Third Party Web Consent' form (where appropriate), which advises parents of student data being stored on non-departmental websites.

Preventing and responding to bullying

The school and its staff are committed to ensuring school safety and this includes bullying.

“Bullying means that a person repeatedly is exposed to unpleasant or degrading treatment, and that the person finds it difficult to defend him or herself against it.” (source unknown)

The school staff will attend promptly to all forms of negative behaviour and will follow the flow chart below (next page) when it is determined that bullying is involved.

At time of publication, the school is reviewing its whole school program with a view to upgrading it.

Staff undergo professional development each time there is a change to our program or an expressed need to raise skills in an identified area.

Bullying response flowchart for teachers

Please note these timelines may be adjusted depending on the unique circumstances and risk associated with each situation. This is at the professional judgment of the staff involved. Timeframes should be clearly discussed and agreed with student and family.



Key contacts for students and parents to report bullying:

Prep to Year 6 – Class teacher

- Provide a safe, quiet space to talk
- Reassure the student that you will listen to them
- Let them share their experience and feelings without interruption
- If you hold immediate concerns for the student's safety, let the student know how you will address these. Immediate in this circumstance is where the staff member believes the student is likely to experience harm (from others or self) within the next 24 hours
- Ask the student for examples they have of the alleged bullying (e.g. hand written notes or screenshots)
- Write a record of your communication with the student
- Check back with the student to ensure you have the facts correct
- Enter the record in OneSchool
- Notify parent/s that the issue of concern is being investigated
- Gather additional information from other students, staff or family
- Review any previous reports or records for students involved
- Make sure you can answer who, what, where, when and how
- Clarify information with student and check on their wellbeing
- Evaluate the information to determine if bullying has occurred or if another disciplinary matter is at issue
- Make a time to meet with the student to discuss next steps
- Ask the student what they believe will help address the situation
- Provide the student and parent with information about student support network
- Agree to a plan of action and timeline for the student, parent and yourself
- Document the plan of action in OneSchool
- Complete all actions agreed with student and parent within agreed timeframes
- Monitor the student and check in regularly on their wellbeing
- Seek assistance from student support network if needed
- Meet with the student to review situation
- Discuss what has changed, improved or worsened
- Explore other options for strengthening student wellbeing or safety
- Report back to parent
- Record outcomes in OneSchool
- Continue to check in with student on regular basis until concerns have been mitigated
- Record notes of follow-up meetings in OneSchool
- Refer matter to specialist staff within 48 hours if problems escalate
- Look for opportunities to improve school wellbeing for all students

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. Given that there are age restrictions on social media platforms that excludes primary aged children, the school notes that there should be no incidents arising from primary aged children, however we are aware that some users have bypassed these restrictions and there are others in the school community (parents, older siblings, past students) who have legitimate access to these platforms.

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.
- Consider your audience. 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.

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

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

Possible civil or criminal ramifications of online commentary

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

What about other people's privacy?

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

What if I encounter problem content?

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

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

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](#).

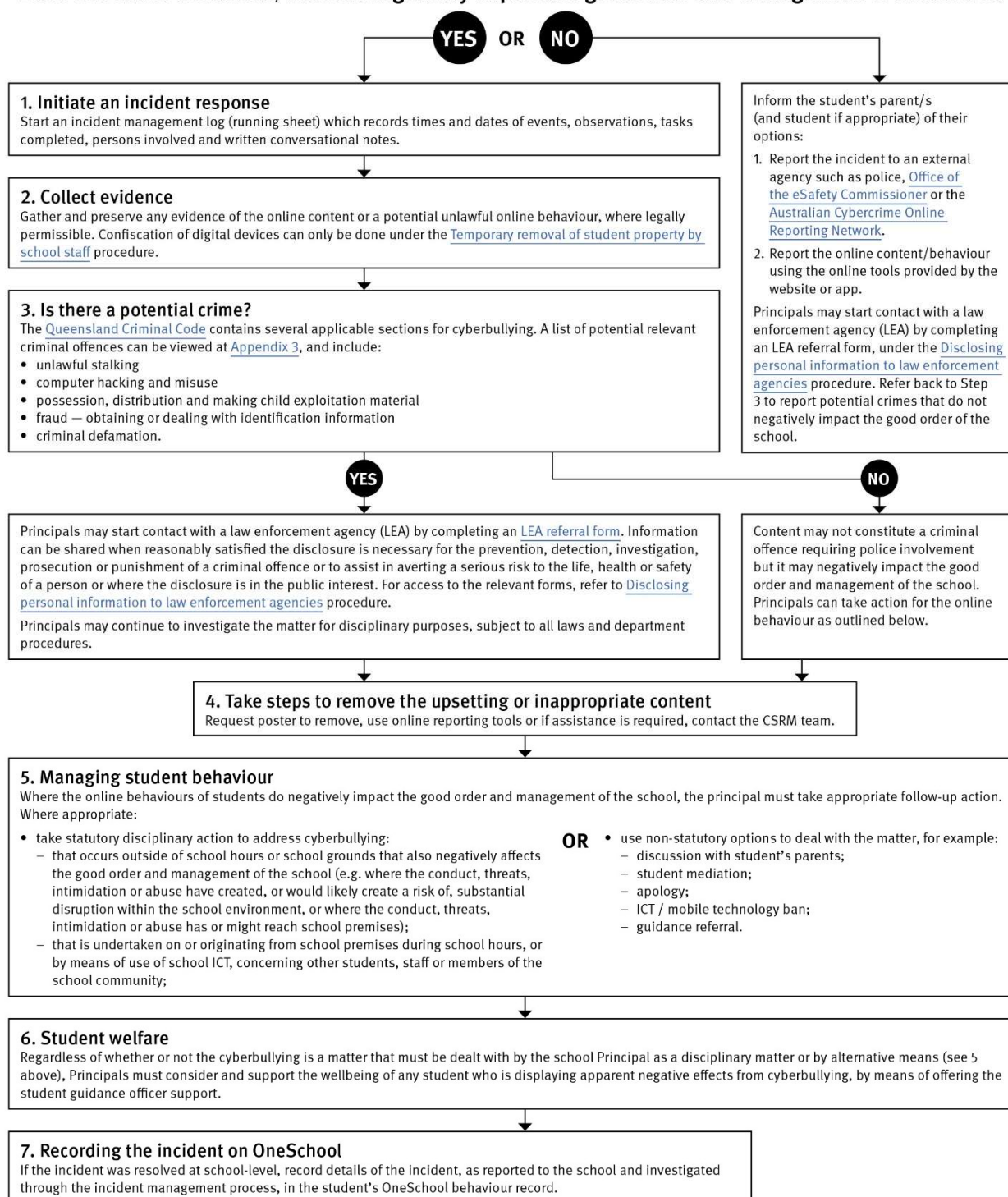
Explicit images

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](#).

Help

Refer to the [Online incident management guidelines](#) for more details, or if assistance is required, contact the Cybersecurity 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?**



Restrictive Practices

School staff members at Coominya 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.

The review may also flag the need for extra, special plans for individuals. Any extra plans would be developed with expert staff and parental input.

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