



Withcott State School

Student Code of Conduct

2025-2026

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 2020-2024

Purpose

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

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

Contact Information

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Lyndal Symonds – Principal

Endorsement

Principal Name: Lyndal Symonds

Principal Signature:

Date:

P/C President Name: Amelia Keong

P/C President
Signature:

Date:

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Whole School Approach to Discipline

Withcott State School is a Positive Behaviour for Learning School (PBL) this is a whole-school approach, used in all classrooms and programs offered through the school, including sporting activities and excursions.

The goal of PBL is to improve and maximise academic and social outcomes for ALL students. Part of the PBL process is to define and explicitly teach expected school behaviours, develop systems for acknowledging positive student behaviour and employ consistent procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

PBL is an evidence-based framework used to:

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

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

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

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Resilient

We believe the philosophy and practices of Restorative Practices have much to offer in the development of well-rounded, socially and emotionally competent students who are accountable for their behaviour and understand that there is nothing they do (or don't do) which doesn't impact on others in some way. Restorative Practices requires a paradigm shift in thinking for those who believe punishment is the only means of effectively dealing with unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour. The beliefs of Restorative Practices align with our school vision by fostering a sense of belonging and emotional growth. Put simply, Restorative Practices is a philosophy that has, as its guiding principles:

- Misconduct is a fundamental violation of people's rights and interpersonal relationships.
- Violations create accountability, obligations and liabilities.
- Restorative Practices seeks to heal and 'put right the wrongs'.

Restorative Practices is a participatory and democratic justice that focuses on the incident and surrounding circumstances rather than solely on the offender's behaviour. It's an approach to unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour and conflict that sees the behaviours as a violation of people and / or property. When such matters are dealt with in a restorative framework, it involves:

- The bringing together of those responsible and accountable (offender/s).
- The most affected by wrongdoing (victim/s).

Individually and collectively, people address the harm on those most affected, investigate ways to make amends and repair the relationship to make things right.

When students understand that restorative processes will be fair and non-punitive, they begin to take ownership and responsibility of their own behaviour. Self-discipline is a learned process and is achieved through implementing a wide range of supportive strategies. The school cannot work alone in creating a selfdisciplined environment and the involvement of parents is therefore of paramount importance.

Parents have a joint responsibility to encourage students to be accountable for their behaviour which will ultimately contribute to the broader community in a positive manner.

Our school values and expectations have been agreed upon and endorsed by all staff and our school P&C.

At Withcott State School, we value joint responsibility and open lines of communication between school and the home. We invite parents to communicate with teachers and if necessary, the school leadership team on behaviour related issues. Likewise, parents will be notified of persistent behavioural incidents that are not conducive to the learning environment.

Consideration of Individual Circumstances

At Withcott State School, a student's individual circumstances, such as the student's behaviour history, disability, mental health and wellbeing, religious and cultural considerations, home environment and care arrangements are taken into account when responding to inappropriate behaviour and applying a disciplinary consequence. Support for these students is documented using OneSchool records.

In considering the individual circumstances of each student, we recognise that the way we teach, the support we provide and the way we respond to students will differ. This reflects the principle of equity, where every student is given the support they need to be successful. These are 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 consequences another student might have received, we will not disclose or discuss this information with anyone but the student's family. We expect that parents and students will respect the privacy of other students and families.

Differentiated and Explicit Teaching

Withcott 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.

At Withcott State School we emphasise the importance of explicitly teaching students the behaviours we want them to demonstrate at school. The Withcott State School Expectations Matrix (Refer to Appendix 1) outlines our agreed values and behavioural expectations in all school settings. These expectations are explicitly taught to students via a number of strategies including:

- lessons conducted by classroom teachers at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year as required
- focus 'expectation of the week' discussed by classroom teachers and by the principal on weekly assemblies
- during active supervision by staff during classroom and non-classroom activities.

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



Focused Teaching

Each year a small number of students at Withcott State School are identified through our data as needing additional targeted behavioural support. In most cases the identified behaviours of these students may not be immediately regarded as severe, but the frequency of their behaviours may put the students' learning and social success at risk if not addressed in a timely manner. These students attend their normal scheduled classes and activities with appropriate adjustments as required. However, they have increased daily opportunities to receive positive contact with adults. Where required, adjustments are made through academic support, adult mentoring or intensive social skills training. A behaviour support plan including goals for behaviour, may be required. Students, whose behaviour does not improve, or whose previous behaviour indicates a need for specialised intervention, are referred for intensive behaviour support.

Intensive Teaching

Intensive behaviour support: Behaviour Support Team (Class teacher, Principal, Internal PBL coach, External PBL coach)

Withcott State School is committed to educating all students, including those with the highest behavioural support needs. We recognise that students with highly complex and challenging behaviours need comprehensive systems of support that can be accessed by referral.

The Behaviour Support Team:

- works with school based staff to develop appropriate behaviour support strategies
- monitors the impact of support for individual students through continuous data collection
- makes adjustments as required for the student, and
- works with Student Support Service team to achieve continuity and consistency.

Legislative Delegations

Legislation

Relevant links to legislation that inform the overall Student discipline procedure.

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

Disciplinary Consequences

At Withcott State School, communication of our key messages about behaviour is backed up through reinforcement, which provides students with feedback for engaging in expected school behaviour. A custom designed 'star' is the symbol and currency for acknowledging positive student behaviour.

At Withcott State School age-appropriate praise, acknowledgement, rewards and incentives are utilised to support and give feedback to students.

Frequent:

- age-appropriate praise with specific, positive and explicit feedback
- issuing of light blue stars

Intermittent:

- Certificate presented at assembly for positive behaviours demonstrated
- Trading of light blue stars for incentives that have been determined by the students in conjunction with the class teacher

Occasional:

- A student from each class who demonstrates the most notable improvement in demonstrating positive behaviour over a 5 week period will be acknowledged with a Principal's Award by way of certificate and recognition on assembly.

Responding to unacceptable behaviour

Students come to school to learn. Responding to unacceptable behaviour provides an opportunity for learning how to function in ways that are expected within the school. When responding to unacceptable behaviour, the staff member first determines, in the context of school-wide expectations if the problem behaviour is major or minor.

Minor behaviours are those that:

- are minor breaches of the school-wide expectations
- do not seriously harm others or cause you to suspect that the student may be harmed
- do not impede the rights of others in any other serious way
- are not part of a pattern of problem behaviours; they are infrequent
- do not require involvement of specialist support staff or Administration

Major problem behaviours are those that:

- do significantly impede the rights of others
- do put others/self at risk of harm
- may require the direct involvement of school Administration.

Consequences/ strategies for supporting minor problem behaviours are logically connected to the problem behaviour and may include:

- 1:1 Conference
- Active supervision
- Re-direct/pre-correct
- Rule reminder
- Stimulus change
- Natural consequence
- Restorative Practices
- Calming time
- Logical consequence
- Walk and talk
- Choice
- Loss of privilege
- Short-term withdrawal from the activity or event for a specified period of time (time out) within class/to buddy classroom

Consequences/ strategies for supporting major problem behaviours with no immediate threat may result in the following consequences:

- 1:1 Conference
- Rule reminder
- Apology (written/verbal)
- Restorative Practices
- Loss of privilege
- Withdrawal from activity to another (buddy) classroom or the office
- Feedback to parents/caregivers
- Referral to administration staff
- In-school suspension
- Suspension
- Exclusion

Consequences for major problem behaviours with an immediate threat result in an immediate referral to Administration because of their seriousness. Administration staff collect and review the evidence and implement consequences accordingly. Students who engage in very serious problem behaviours such as major violent physical assault, or the use or supply of weapons or drugs may result in recommendation for exclusion from school following an immediate period of suspension.

Suspension and Exclusion will occur in accordance with policy SMS-PR-021: Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment.

Temporary removal of student property

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

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

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

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

The following items are explicitly prohibited at Withcott 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).

** 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 in the form of a letter to administer any medication to students (including over-the-counter medications such as paracetamol or alternative medicines).

Responsibilities

School staff at Withcott State School:

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

Parents of students at Withcott State School ensure your children do not bring property onto schools grounds or other settings used by the school (e.g. camp, sporting venues) that:

- o is prohibited according to the Withcott State School Student Code of Conduct
- o is illegal
- o puts the safety or wellbeing of others at risk
- o does not preserve a caring, safe, supportive or productive learning environment
- o does not maintain and foster mutual respect;

Parents are to collect the 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 Withcott State School

- do not bring property onto school grounds or other settings used by the school (e.g. camp, sporting venues) that:
 - o is prohibited according to the Withcott State School Code of Conduct
 - o is illegal
 - o puts the safety or wellbeing of others at risk
 - o does not preserve a caring, safe, supportive or productive learning environment
 - o 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, smart watches and other devices by students

This school based policy is specifically for the management of

- mobile phones
- smart watches
- tablet, slate or laptop computers
- wearable technology or sensing devices

This list will be referred to as 'devices'.

Our school policy requires students:

- To turn off devices and hand in/pick up from the phone box in the office before and after school
- to ensure smart watches/ wearable technology are not to be connected to phones or data during school hours.
- Parents are to place devices into school mode during the hours of 8:30am-3pm
- Our policy also gives teachers the right to ask students to remove their smart watch/ wearable technology if it is deemed to be a distraction to their learning or breaches assessment/test conditions.

School policy have been devised in alignment with the following policies:

[Advice for state schools on acceptable use of ICT facilities and devices \(DOE staff only\)](#)

[Use of IT systems](#)

Devices for Medical reasons

If a device is used for medical reasons (eg. Diabetic BSL monitoring) The device should be kept in the vicinity the student and monitored by supervising adults, only used for the intended purpose.

Preventing and responding to bullying

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

Withcott State School is a Positive Behaviour for Learning School (PBL). The goal of PBL is to improve and maximise academic and social outcomes for ALL students. Part of the PBL process is to define and explicitly teach expected school behaviours, develop systems for acknowledging positive student behaviour and employ consistent procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour, including bullying.

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



1. Leadership

Principals and school leaders playing an active role in building a positive learning environment where the whole school community feels included, connected, safe and respected. The Leadership Team are committed to providing PD to staff and at induction, about recognising and responding to bullying.

2. Inclusion

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

3. Student voice

Students actively participate in their own learning and wellbeing, feel connected and use their social and emotional skills to be respectful, resilient and responsible.

4. Partnerships

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

5. Support

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

Bullying

The agreed national definition for Australian schools describes bullying as

- ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm;
- involving an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening;
- happening in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records);
- having immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.
- However, these conflicts are still considered serious and need to be addressed and resolved. At Withcott State School our staff will work to quickly respond to any matters raised of this nature in collaboration with students and parents.
- The following flowchart explains the actions Withcott State School teachers will take when they receive a report about student bullying, including bullying which may have occurred online or outside of the school setting. Please note that the indicative timeframes will vary depending on the professional judgment of teachers who receive the bullying complaint and their assessment of immediate risk to student/s.

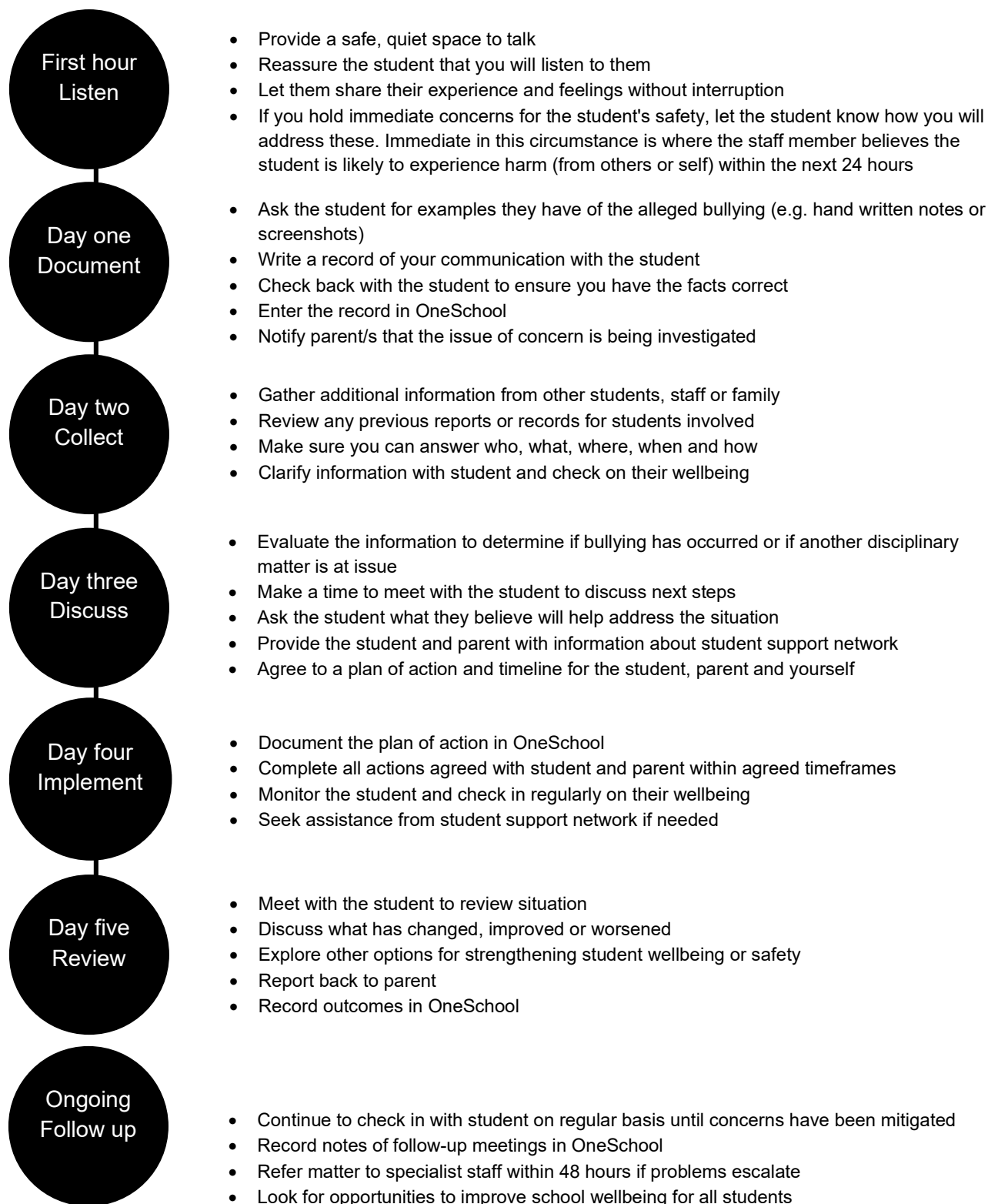
Bullying response flowchart for teachers

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

Principal – Lyndal Symonds ph 46149333



Cyberbullying

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

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

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

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

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

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](#).

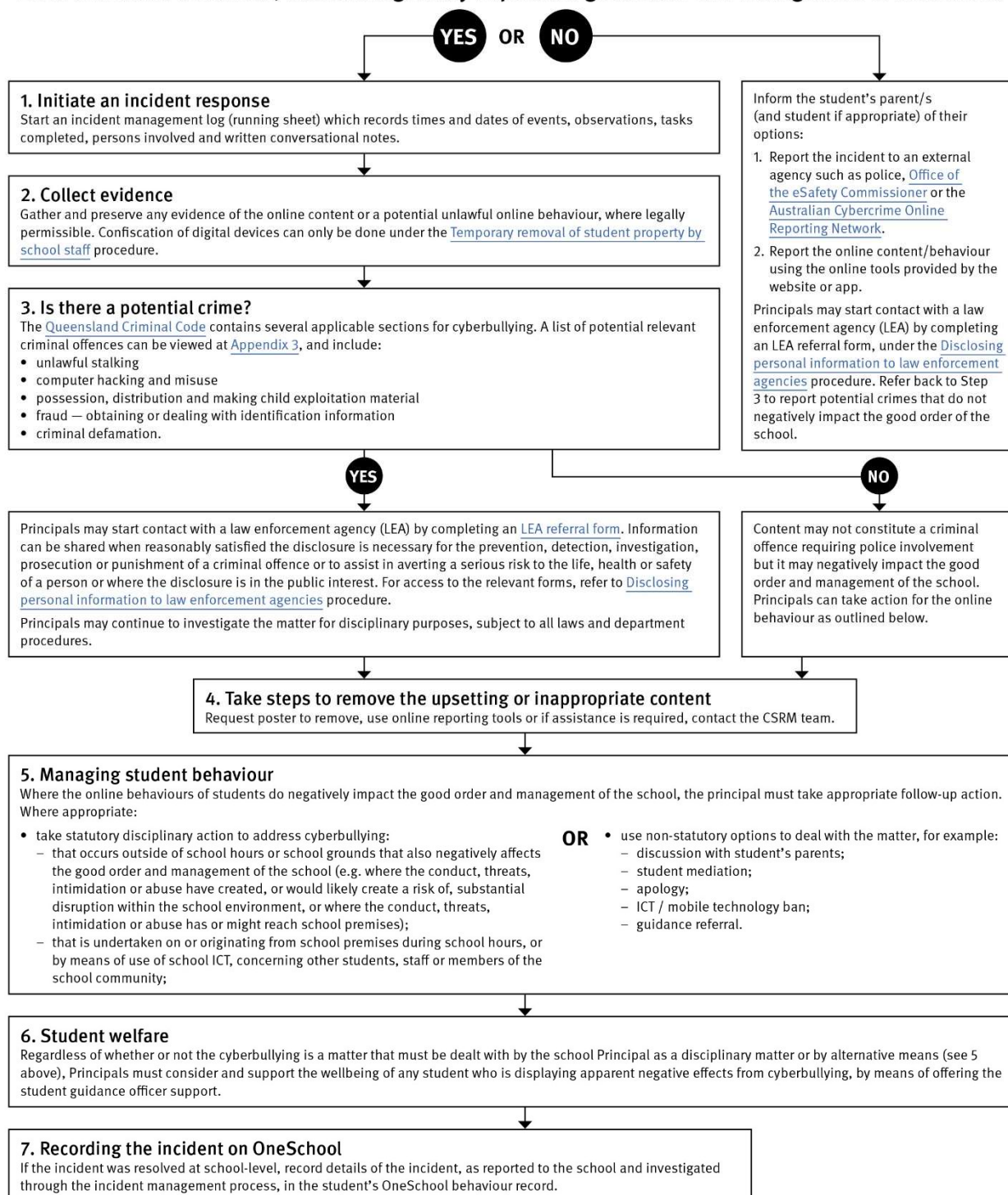
Explicit images

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 Cybersafety and Reputation Management (CSRM) team on 3034 5035 or Cybersafety.ReputationManagement@qed.qld.gov.au.

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



Cybersafety and Reputation Management (CRM)

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

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

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

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

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

Student Intervention and Support Services

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

Students who have been subject or witness to bullying have access to a range of internal support staff, such as the Guidance Officer or Chaplain. Students are, however, also encouraged to approach any staff member with whom they feel comfortable sharing their concerns, regardless of their role in the school. All staff at Withcott State School are familiar with the response expectations to reports of bullying, and will act quickly to ensure students' concerns are addressed. Depending on the nature of the reported bullying incident, a formal plan of action may be developed and documented to support the implementation of strategies to assist the student.

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

Withcott State School– Anti-Bullying Contract

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

Withcott State School– Anti Bullying Contract

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

The agreed national definition for Australian schools describes bullying as ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm; involving an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening; happening in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records); having immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

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

I agree to:

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

Student's signature

Parent's signature

School representative signature

Date

Appropriate Use of Social Media

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

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

Being aware of a few simple strategies can help keep the use of social media positive and constructive: Before you post something online, ask yourself if the community or individual really need to know. Is it relevant, positive and helpful?

Remember that what you post online is a direct reflection of who you are. People will potentially form lasting opinions of you based on what you post online.

Be a good role model. If things get heated online consider logging out and taking a few moments to relax and think. Hasty, emotive responses could inflame situations unnecessarily.

Be mindful when commenting, try to keep general and avoid posting anything that could identify individuals.

A few years ago parents may have discussed concerns or issues with their friends at the school gate. Today with the use of social media, online discussions between you and your close friends can very quickly be shared with a much wider audience, potentially far larger than intended.

Taking a few moments to think about the content you are about to post could save upset, embarrassment, and possible legal action.

As a parent you have a role in supervising and regulating your child's online activities at home and its impact on the reputation and privacy of others. Parents are their child's first teachers — so they will learn online behaviours from you.

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

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

While many schools use social media to update parents of school notices, the department prefers that parents contact schools directly with a compliment, complaint or enquiry due to privacy considerations. Imagine if your doctor, accountant or banking institution tried to contact you to discuss important matters via Facebook.

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

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

Possible civil or criminal ramifications of online commentary

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

What about other people's privacy?

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

What if I encounter problem content?

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

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

Restrictive Practices

School staff at Withcott 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:

Regard to the human rights of those students

- Safeguards students, staff and others from harm
- Ensures transparency and accountability
- Places importance on communication and consultation with parents and carers
- Maximises the opportunity for positive outcomes, and
- Aims to reduce or eliminate the use of restrictive practices.

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

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

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

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

Critical Incidents

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

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

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

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

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

School customer complaints management process

1. Our values

We are committed to fostering a school environment that is supportive, respectful, compatible with human rights and provides all students with opportunities to engage in quality learning. Effective partnerships with parents, carers, students and school staff is an essential part of us achieving this goal. We want to know what we are doing well, but also if there are any areas where we can improve or do things differently.

2. Purpose

Withcott State School appreciates and acknowledges that parents, carers, students and community members have a right to make a complaint. This document outlines how Withcott State School will manage these complaints.

3. What is a customer complaint?

A complaint is a customer complaint if the person is unhappy with the service or action of our school or staff, and directly affected by the service or action they are unhappy with.

In our school, the person making a complaint will usually be a parent, carer, student or other school community member, but could also be anyone else directly impacted by something at our school.

Some complaints must be managed using different processes. These include:

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

4. Roles and responsibilities

We treat everyone with respect, courtesy and fairness, and aim to act compatibly with human rights. Our responsibilities include:

- following the customer complaints management [framework](#), [policy](#) and [procedure](#) when managing complaints;
- resolving complaints promptly; and
- providing information about our processes, timeframes and any available review options.

If someone makes a complaint, they also have responsibilities, including:

- cooperating respectfully and understanding that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated;
- giving us a clear idea of the issue or concern and a possible solution;
- providing all relevant information when making the complaint;
- understanding that addressing a complaint can take time; and
- letting us know if something changes, including if help is no longer needed.

5. Complaints management process

At Withcott State School, our complaints management process involves the following steps:

i. Receipt

The complaint should be made where the problem or issue arose. At Withcott School, we ask parents, carers, students or community members who would like to make a complaint to either email or visit the school office to make an appointment to meet with the principal or another member of staff.

The following information should be provided when making a complaint:

- what happened, including when and where it occurred, and who was involved; and
- what outcome or solution you are seeking to address your issue or concern.

We accept anonymous complaints, however it is important to understand that this could limit how a complaint is assessed and resolved, and it may also prevent an outcome being provided.

ii. Assessment and management

We will examine the issue(s) raised and try to resolve the complaint. We aim to do this promptly, but understand that we have many other responsibilities and it may not be possible to make contact or resolve a complaint immediately.

iii. Providing an outcome

Once we finish examining the complaint, we will let the person who has made the complaint know the outcome and any available review options.

Review options

If the person who has made the complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome or the way we handled their complaint, they can contact the [regional office](#) to ask for an internal review. A [Request for internal review form](#) should be completed and the request should be submitted within 28 days.

There is also an external review option (for example, the Queensland Ombudsman or Queensland Human Rights Commission), which becomes available once the department's complaints process has been exhausted.

6. More information and resources

The following resources contain additional information:

- Customer complaints management [framework](#), [policy](#) and [procedure](#)
- [Compliments, suggestions and customer complaints website](#)
- [Making a customer complaint: Information for parents and carers.](#)

Appendix 1: Withcott State School Expectation Matrix

WITHCOTT STATE SCHOOL – EXPECTATIONS MATRIX										
Values	All Areas	Classroom	Transitions	Eating Area	Playground	Toilets	Assembly	Before and after school	Out-of-school activities	Digital spaces
BE RESPONSIBLE	<p>I wear correct school uniform.</p> <p>I keep my hands, feet and objects to myself.</p> <p>I have a go.</p> <p>I am in the right place at the right time.</p> <p>I look after all property.</p> <p>I walk on cement and inside spaces.</p> <p>I stand up against bullying.</p>	<p>I am ready to learn.</p> <p>I will be on task.</p> <p>I follow classroom expectations.</p> <p>I sit safely.</p>	<p>I will be straight there and straight back.</p> <p>I have my belongings ready for transitions.</p> <p>I will carry equipment safely.</p> <p>I will leave space tidy.</p>	<p>I take my lunch and hat to the eating area.</p> <p>I follow the eating routines.</p> <p>I wait quietly to be dismissed for play.</p> <p>I place rubbish in appropriate bins.</p>	<p>I return borrowed equipment to the correct place.</p> <p>I follow the play routines for different areas.</p> <p>I only play non-contact sport.</p> <p>I wear a wide brimmed hat in all outdoor activities.</p>	<p>I use toilets during break times.</p> <p>I use toilets as intended.</p> <p>I flush toilet and then wash hands.</p> <p>I am straight there and straight back.</p>	<p>I will sit quietly and listen to the messages.</p> <p>I will remain seated until directed.</p>	<p>I enter school grounds promptly.</p> <p>I will wait for the bus in the correct area and follow routines.</p> <p>I will cross at the pedestrian crossing.</p> <p>I will wait behind the school fence.</p>	<p>I follow all school expectations.</p> <p>I stay seated while on the bus.</p>	<p>I think carefully before communicating online.</p> <p>I report cyberbullying and any inappropriate content.</p> <p>I will protect my personal information.</p>
	BE RESPECTFUL	<p>I follow all adult directions.</p> <p>I actively listen.</p> <p>I use manners, kind words and actions.</p> <p>I wait and take turns.</p> <p>I allow others to learn.</p> <p>I help others.</p> <p>I am honest.</p>	<p>I allow others to learn and teachers to teach.</p> <p>I enter and exit the classroom correctly.</p>	<p>I make room for others by staying left.</p> <p>I line up correctly.</p> <p>I use a quiet voice.</p>	<p>I use a quiet voice.</p> <p>I eat my own food.</p> <p>I ask permission to get a drink or go to the toilet.</p> <p>I will wait my turn at the tuck shop.</p>	<p>I play by the rules of the game.</p> <p>I am aware of other's space and games.</p>	<p>I respect others privacy.</p> <p>I use my own cubicle.</p> <p>I leave toilets clean and tidy.</p>	<p>I will stand straight with my hands by my side for the national anthem and pledge.</p> <p>I will clap appropriately when required.</p>	<p>I wait patiently to be collected from school.</p>	<p>I am considerate of the public and represent the school and myself with pride.</p>
BE RESILIENT	<p>I try to resolve problems by myself before seeking help.</p> <p>I keep trying.</p> <p>I accept feedback.</p> <p>I accept consequences.</p> <p>I show tolerance.</p>	<p>I participate.</p> <p>I ask for help when needed.</p> <p>I challenge myself.</p> <p>I work towards my goals.</p>	<p>I accept my place in the line.</p>	<p>I will talk to an adult if I have a problem with my lunch.</p>	<p>I accept umpires decision.</p> <p>I ask others to join in.</p>	<p>I report problems to teachers.</p>	<p>I will support the achievements of others.</p>			



WITHCOTT STATE SCHOOL – WHOLE SCHOOL ROUTINES



<p>Before school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before 8:15am stay in the bus assembly area with bag, until released at 8:15am • Phones in the phone box • 8:15-8:50am – notes to the office, bag away, hat, play • 8:50am- toilet and go to class 	<p>Late for school – after 9am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you arrive at school after 9:00am, go directly to the office and get a late slip • Take the late slip to your class teacher 	<p>Assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Wednesday, line up outside your class at 8:50am • Move as a class to the auditorium by 9:00am • Sit in the assigned seats for your class • At the end of assembly follow the directions of your teacher 	<p>Toileting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to the toilet in your lunch breaks • If you are caught by a need during class, ask the teacher for permission to go • Straight there and straight back to class
<p>Eating times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11am take your hat, lunch box and water bottle to your eating area • Sit at a table, eat your lunch and talk with the people around you • 11:15am bell rings – keep your rubbish and scraps with you and close up your containers • Raise your hand until everyone is quiet and the teacher allows you to go • Return your lunch box to your bag • Use the same process at 2nd break (1:00 and then 1:10) 	<p>Play times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play in your allocated areas • Act quickly once you hear the bell • Straight to the toilet and then for a drink • Line up outside your room 	<p>Luckshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place orders by 6am Tuesday morning • 2 students from each class go to collect the Luckshop 5 minutes before break time • Wait for the orders to be handed out (teacher to oversee) • 1 student to return the baskets immediately • Line up quietly for the free sell times (1:10pm) • Afternoon free sell at 3pm 	<p>After school/bus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once you are released go straight to your parents, the gate, NSHC or bus area • Bus students wait in the eating area and follow the directions of the adult in charge • At 3:20pm bus students will be moved to the senior block to play handball, sit or run around close by (stipulated by the teacher on duty) • Those students still waiting at the gate at 3:20pm will be taken by the gate duty person to wait with the bus students outside the senior block • Anyone still not picked up after bus has left will be taken to the office.