Harrisville State School

Student Code of Conduct 2025-2028

Equity and Excellence: realising the potential of every student

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

Queensland Department of Education

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

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Endorsement

Principal Name:	Melissa Hamilton
Principal Signature:	
Date:	21/11/2025
P/C President and-or School Council Chair Name:	Jesse Walters (President)
P/C President and-or School Council Chair Signature:	*J Walters*
Date:	21/11/2025

Contents (Mandated)

Purpose	4
Principals Foreword	4
P&C Statement of support	5
Whole School Approach to Discipline	6
Schoolwide Expectations	6
Consideration of Individual Circumstances	8
Student wellbeing	8
Differentiated and Explicit Teaching	9
Focussed Teaching	9
Intensive Teaching	10
Disciplinary Consequences	10
School Policies	12
Temporary removal of student property	13
Use of mobile phones and other devices by students	14
Preventing and responding to bullying	16
Appropriate use of social media	22
Restrictive Practices	24
Critical Incidents	25

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Purpose

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

The Harrisville State School Student Code of Conduct sets out the responsibilities and processes we use in our school to promote a productive, effective whole school approach to discipline.

Its purpose is to facilitate high standards of behaviour from the wider school community, ensuring teaching and learning in our school is prioritised, where all students are able to experience success and staff enjoy a safe workplace.

Principal's Foreword

Introduction

Harrisville State School has a long history of delivering a high-quality education for the children of our small-town community. We consider the Student Code of Conduct policy to provide an opportunity for valuable social learning as well as a means of maximising the success of student academic outcomes.

We emphasise recognition for positive behaviours and respond to inappropriate and unacceptable behaviours in a timely manner. Through our school plan, shared expectations for student behaviour are clear to everyone, assisting Harrisville 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 school expectations to teach and promote our high standards of responsible behaviour:

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

These shared school expectations were agreed upon and endorsed by school staff and our school P&C. They are aligned with the values, principles and expected standards outlined in the Department of Education Queensland's Code of School Behaviour.

I thank the students, teachers, parents and members of our wider community for sharing their values and having an input into the development of Harrisville State School's Student Code of Conduct. Having this shared approach will ensure our students receive a consistent understanding regarding our school expectations and how to best display these.

Melissa Hamilton

Principal

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P&C Statement of Support

At Harrisville State School, we firmly believe that every student deserves to learn in an environment where they feel safe, valued, and supported by both staff and their peers. A genuine sense of security and wellbeing is fundamental to creating a positive learning atmosphere and is essential for students to reach their fullest potential.

The Harrisville State School Student Code of Conduct unequivocally states that bullying in any form will not be tolerated and sets clear expectations for respectful and responsible interactions among all members of our school community.

On behalf of the current Harrisville State School Parents' and Citizens' Association, I wish to express our full endorsement of this code. We are committed to fostering a school culture where every child arrives each day feeling confident, encouraged, and ready to engage in learning. I encourage all members of our community to review the Student Code of Conduct and to use it as a guiding framework for their actions and interactions within our school.

Together, by upholding these shared values and expectations, we can ensure Harrisville State School remains a safe and supportive environment for every student.

Yours sincerely,

Jesse Walters

2025 Harrisville State School P&C President

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Whole School Approach to Discipline

The first step in facilitating standards of positive behaviour is communicating those standards to **all** students. At Harrisville State School we emphasise the importance of explicitly teaching students the expected behaviours we want them to demonstrate at school. Communicating behavioural expectations is a form of universal behaviour support - a strategy directed towards **all** students, designed to prevent inappropriate behaviour and provide a framework for responding to unacceptable behaviour. Our weekly and fortnightly behaviour focus is data driven and based on student needs.

Our behaviour expectations are positively reinforced through the fast and frequent reward of SuperStars. SuperStars are collected by students and can be used to purchase items from the SuperStars Shop.

Additionally, positive student behaviour is acknowledged during our weekly whole school parades where students are given certificates for exemplary behaviour.

The Schoolwide Expectations Teaching Matrix below outlines our agreed upon expectations for all school settings.

SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS TEACHING MATRIX					
	ALL AREAS	**LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**	**PLAYGROUND**	**TRANSITION/LINE UP**	**TOILETS**
BE RESPECTFUL	▪ I use appropriate language ▪ I am respectful of my own and others property ▪ I keep bullying and hurtful actions out of our school ▪ I follow staff directions ▪ I clean up after myself	▪ I leave only with permission ▪ I follow teacher directions ▪ I co-operate with others ▪ I wear the full and correct school uniform ▪ I am a listener	▪ Participate in school approved games ▪ Wear shoes and socks at all times ▪ Be sun safe; wear a broad brimmed hat ▪ I share equipment ▪ I use polite language ▪ I follow teacher directions ▪ I invite others who want to join in ▪ I put rubbish in the bin	▪ Rails are for hands ▪ Walk one step at a time ▪ I walk quietly so others can continue learning ▪ I am in the right place at the right time	▪ Respect privacy of others ▪ I use toilets appropriately ▪ I use water, soap and paper towels in a sustainable way.
BE RESPONSIBLE	▪ I am an active listener ▪ I am an active learner ▪ I am a responsible school member ▪ I take care of the school environment ▪ I use my High Five strategies	▪ I give my best effort at all times ▪ I am prepared with the right equipment ▪ I follow the classroom rules and expectations	▪ Be a problem solver ▪ Return equipment to appropriate place at the bell ▪ I try new games and activities	▪ Move through the school in quiet lines ▪ I wait quietly in the line up area ▪ I follow teacher directions	▪ Use toilets during breaks ▪ I am water and paper wise ▪ I use the toilets for their intended use
BE SAFE	▪ I keep my hands, feet and objects to myself ▪ I walk on hard surfaces ▪ I act in a sensible manner when the bell rings ▪ I use my High Five strategies ▪ I report major issues to a staff member	▪ Raise your hand to speak ▪ Respect others' right to learn ▪ I am only in the classroom when an adult is present ▪ I follow the rules of our school to keep myself and others safe ▪ I use equipment and furniture appropriately	▪ Play fairly – take turns, invite others to join in and follow rules ▪ I care for the environment by putting rubbish in the bin ▪ I am sun safe with my uniform including hats and covered shoes. ▪ I keep my hands, feet and objects to myself ▪ I play in the correct area.	▪ I move to my line area when the 2nd bell goes ▪ I wait for instructions from my teacher ▪ I move sensibly to my classroom. Walking on the left-hand side of the stairs.	▪ I wash my hands with soap and dispose of the paper towel in the bin ▪ I walk to and from the toilet.

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Parents and staff

The table below explains the expectations for parents when visiting our school and the standards we commit to as staff. These align to the Department of Educations current Parent and Community Code of Conduct.

Be Safe

What we expect to see from you	*What you can expect from us*
You encourage your child to follow school safety expectations, including keeping their hands, feet, and objects to themselves.	We will provide a safe and supportive environment where students feel secure.
You support and reinforce the importance of wearing a hat for sun safety and using school equipment appropriately.	We will educate students on safe practices and reinforce safety expectations frequently and consistently.
You leave and collect your child from the designated area at school promptly during supervised times.	We will maintain clear safety procedures and effectively supervise students to ensure their wellbeing.
You support the school's policies on appropriate technology use, including students keeping mobile phones away for the day.	We will monitor technology use on school devices and provide guidance regarding digital safety.

Be Responsible

What we expect to see from you	*What you can expect from us*
You ensure your child attends school every day and notify any reasons for absence at the commencement of the school day.	We will create a supportive learning environment and communicate promptly about student absences or important updates.
You will communicate with the school promptly to notify of any changes in contact details.	We will ensure our records are updated within a timely manner to ensure you are reachable in any emergency situation.
You encourage your child to be prepared for class with the required materials and a positive attitude.	We will provide engaging and structured lessons to support student learning.
You model respectful communication and follow appropriate protocols to discuss school-related concerns. Compliments are always welcome, too.	We will be available to address concerns and respond to queries in a timely manner. We will set clear expectations and provide support.

Be Respectful

What we expect to see from you	*What you can expect from us*
You encourage and support your child to arrive in their uniform, on time and ready to learn each day.	We will provide a structured and engaging learning environment.
You support your child to take responsibility for their learning by asking questions and seeking help when they need it.	We will encourage curiosity, provide feedback, and guide students to develop problem-solving skills.
You reinforce the importance of listening, staying focused, and working collaboratively in class.	We will teach students how to engage respectfully and work effectively in different learning situations.

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Consideration of Individual Circumstances

At Harrisville State School, we are dedicated to upholding the Code of School Behaviour and the Department of Education Queensland's Parent and Community Code of Conduct. We consider the unique circumstances and needs of every individual student and community member in all decision-making processes.

Our approach to student support and discipline includes:

- Creating an inclusive environment which recognises each student's individual background and needs.
- Implementing fair and non-violent consequences for breaches, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement.
- Ensuring a safe, supportive, and discrimination-free learning environment for all students and staff.

Staff take into account behaviour history, levels of abilities, wellbeing, cultural background, and home circumstances when managing behaviour. Equity means providing tailored support for individual success, not uniform treatment. Some students may need additional assistance or practice to meet expectations, and disciplinary actions may be adjusted for students with complex needs.

Staff are legally obliged to protect student privacy at all times. Details of disciplinary actions are only shared with the student's family. Even in cases such as bullying, information about other students will not be disclosed. All matters are handled confidentially and seriously, and all families are expected to respect student's right to privacy.

If you have concerns about another student's behaviour or the school's responses, you are encouraged to arrange a confidential meeting with the teacher or principal.

Student Wellbeing

Students at Harrisville State School are supported through positive reinforcement and a system of universal, targeted, and intensive behaviour supports by:

- Parents
- Teachers/Support Staff
- Principal
- Guidance Officer
- Advisory Visiting Teachers
- School Chaplain
- School Social Worker

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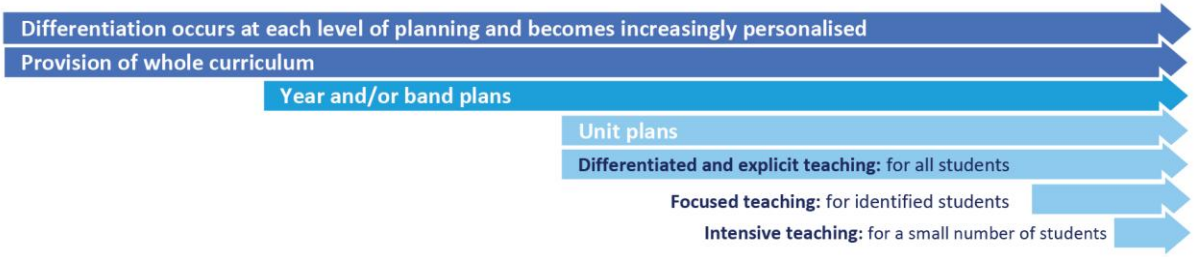
Differentiated and Explicit Teaching

Harrisville State School is a disciplined school environment which provides differentiated teaching approaches to support to the learning needs of all students. This includes 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 Harrisville State School vary the content students are taught, how they are taught and ways in which students can demonstrate what they know as part of our differentiated approach to student behaviour. These decisions about differentiation are made in response to data and day-to-day monitoring, identifying the behavioural learning needs of students. This enables our teachers to purposefully plan a variety of ways to engage students, assist them to achieve expected learning outcomes and to demonstrate their learning.

Below is the three main layers of differentiation provided to students. This model is also used for academic and pedagogical differentiation. Each layer provides progressively more personalised supports for individual students.



Focused Teaching

Typically, around 15% of students will need additional support to meet behavioural expectations, even after differentiated and explicit instruction. These students may find expected behaviours challenging at certain times or in specific learning areas, so focused teaching is provided.

Focused teaching revisits key behavioural concepts and skills using direct, structured methods, offering students more chances to practise and master expected behaviours.

At Harrisville State School, support staff—including specialists in learning, language, or development—collaborate with classroom teachers to deliver focused teaching in line with the Behaviour Expectations Matrix. Classroom teachers then monitor student progress to determine who no longer needs extra support, who continues to require focused teaching, or who may need intensive teaching.

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Intensive Teaching

Approximately 5% of students in any school will require intensive, personalised teaching to master behavioural expectations. This involves frequent, explicit instruction, often in small groups or individually, and is guided by ongoing data and consultation with families. For complex cases, tailored behaviour assessments and multi-agency support may be offered.

Intensive teaching involves providing students with frequent, explicit instruction, often in small groups or individually, and is guided by ongoing data and consultation with families. For complex cases, tailored behaviour assessments and multi-agency support may be offered. As a small school, we often provide this support through contact with Regional Support Staff.

Disciplinary Consequences

Harrisville State School makes systematic efforts to prevent inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour by teaching and reinforcing expected behaviours on an ongoing basis. When negative behaviour incidents do occur, it is important that consequences are as predictable as possible. Our school seeks to ensure that responses to inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour are consistent and proportionate to the nature of the behaviour. All decisions regarding consequences are based on individual circumstances, including the needs of the child being given consequences.

Behaviour incidents are recorded in the individual student's Student Profile on OneSchool.

Minor and major behaviours

When responding to behaviour incidents, the staff member determines if the negative behaviour is minor or major, with the following agreed understanding:

- **Minor** behaviour incidents are managed by staff members at the time it occurs;
- **Major** behaviour incidents are referred directly to the Principal.

Minor behaviours include those which:

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

Minor problem behaviours may result in the following consequences:

- parallel acknowledgement of example behaviours;
- non-verbal and visual cues;
- reminders of expected behaviours and rules;
- redirections to the desired behaviours;
- take up time;
- explicit behavioural instructions;
- proximity;
- tactical ignoring;
- a minor consequence logically connected to the inappropriate behaviour, such as complete removal from an activity or event for a specified period of time, partial removal (time away), individual meeting with the student, apology, restitution or detention for work completion.
- a re-direction process where a staff member takes the student aside and:

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1. names the behaviour that student is displaying
2. asks student to name school expectation breached
3. states and explains expected school behaviour if necessary
4. gives positive verbal acknowledgement for expected school behaviour.

Major behaviours are those which:

- significantly violate the rights of others;
- put others/self at risk of harm;
- require the involvement of school Administration.

Major behaviours result in an immediate referral to the Principal because of the level of seriousness. When major unacceptable behaviour occurs, staff members calmly state the behaviour and remind the student of expected school behaviour. The staff member then escorts the student to Administration. A report of the student's behaviour is recorded on OneSchool. Parents are often contacted and informed of the behaviour misconduct.

Major problem behaviours may result in the following consequences:

- 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;
- Suspension pending exclusion (student is suspended from school pending a decision by the Director-General baswed on the recommendations of the school Principal;

Harrisville State School implements the following proactive and preventative processes and strategies to support and encourage positive student behaviour:

- School newsletter items;
- Individual Behaviour Support Plans for students with diverse behavioural needs;
- SuperStars – tokens for positive behaviours;
- Weekly certificates at Parade;
- Principal's Morning Tea;
- Ice-block for 100% student attendance;
- Positive SMS sent home;
- Phone Away for the Day Policy – for all communication devices, including phones and smart watches.

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's:

- 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 Harrisville State School, the use of any SDA is considered as a very serious decision. It is typically only used by the Principal when other options have been exhausted or the student's

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behaviour is dangerous enough that continued attendance at the school is considered a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the school community.

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

Re-entry following suspension

Students who are suspended from Harrisville State School will 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. The aim of the re-entry meeting is for school staff to set the student up for future success and strengthen home-school communication.

Arrangements

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

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

School Policies

Harrisville State School has tailored school discipline policies designed to ensure students, staff and visitors work cooperatively to create and maintain a supportive and safe learning environment. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the responsibilities for students, staff and visitors outlined in the following policies:

- Temporary removal of student property
- Use of mobile phones and other devices by students
- Preventing and responding to bullying
- Appropriate use of social media

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Temporary removal of student property

The removal of any property in a student's possession may be necessary to continue 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 Fact Sheet 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. Items removed are generally returned to students (or their parent) at the end of the school day, unless they are deemed to be dangerous.

The following items are explicitly prohibited at Harrisville 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 etc);
- imitation guns or weapons;
- potentially dangerous items (e.g. blades, rope);
- drugs** (including tobacco and vapes);
- alcohol;
- aerosol deodorants or cans (including spray paint);
- explosives (e.g. fireworks, flares, sparklers etc);
- flammable solids or liquids (e.g. fire starters, mothballs, lighters);
- poisons (e.g. weed killer, insecticides);
- chewing gum;
- inappropriate or offensive material (e.g. racist literature, pornography, extremist propaganda).

* No knives of any type are allowed at school, including flick knives, ballistic knives, sheath knives, push daggers, trench knives, butterfly knives, star knives, butter knives, fruit knives or craft knives, or any item that can be used as a weapon, for example a chisel. Knives needed for school activities will be provided by the school, and the use of them will be supervised by school staff. In circumstances where students are required to have their own knives or sharp tools for particular subjects or vocational courses, the school will provide information about the procedures for carrying and storing these items at school.

** The administration of medications to students by school staff is only considered when a prescribing health practitioner has determined that it is necessary or when there is no other alternative in relation to the treatment of a specific health need. Schools require medical authorisation to administer any medication to students (**including over-the-counter medications such as paracetamol or alternative medicines**). You will need to speak with school staff to arrange the administration of medication for your student.

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Responsibilities

State school staff at Harrisville State School:

- do not require the student's consent to search school property such as 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 possession, prior to seeking consent to search from a parent or calling the police;
- acknowledge that consent from the student or parent is required to examine or otherwise deal with the temporarily removed student property. For example, staff who temporarily remove a mobile phone from a student are not authorised to unlock the phone or to read, copy or delete messages stored on the phone;
- are aware that 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);
- acknowledge that 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 Harrisville State School must:

- 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 Harrisville 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 Harrisville State School:

- do not bring property onto school grounds or other settings used by the school (e.g. camp, sporting venues) that:
    - is prohibited according to the Harrisville State School Code of Conduct;
    - is illegal;
    - puts the safety or wellbeing of others at risk;
    - does not preserve a caring, safe, supportive or productive learning environment;
    - does not maintain and foster mutual respect;
- collect their property as soon as possible when advised by the Principal or state school staff it is available for collection.

Use of mobile phones and other devices by students

Harrisville State School determines that time and space should be provided at school where technology is not permitted, and students are encouraged to engage in other social interactions and development activities.

We follow the 'away for the day' expectation. Families are encouraged to prevent their student from bringing devices to school. Any student who brings a phone, laptop, tablet or personal and wearable device (eg. smart watch) is ***required to hand these to their teacher until home time***. This includes school camps, excursions and school events (eg. Disco).

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Responsibilities

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

It is **acceptable** for students at Harrisville State School to:

- use school supplied devices for –
    - assigned class work and assignments set by teachers;
    - developing appropriate literacy, communication and information skills;
    - authoring text, artwork, audio and visual material for publication on the intranet or internet for educational purposes as supervised and approved by the school;
    - conducting general research for school activities and projects;
    - communicating or collaborating with other students, teachers, parents or experts in relation to school work;
    - accessing online references such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, etc.;
    - researching and learning through the department's eLearning environment;
- be courteous, considerate and respectful of others when using a device;
- seek teacher's approval where they wish to use a mobile device under special circumstances, which would be agreed upon between parent/school, previously.

It is **unacceptable** for students at Harrisville State School to:

- use a mobile phone at school;
- use a mobile phone or other devices in an unlawful manner;
- use a mobile phone (during school hours) in technology-free designated spaces;
- download, distribute or publish offensive messages or pictures;
- use obscene, inflammatory, racist, discriminatory or derogatory language;
- use language and/or threats of violence that may amount to bullying and/or harassment, or even stalking;
- insult, harass or attack others or use obscene or abusive language;
- deliberately waste printing and internet resources;
- damage computers, printers or network equipment;
- commit plagiarism or violate copyright laws;
- ignore teacher directions for the use of social media (eg. online email and internet chat);
- send chain letters or spam email;
- knowingly download viruses or any other programs capable of breaching the department's network security;
- use in-phone cameras anywhere a normal camera would be considered inappropriate, such as in change rooms or toilets;
- invade someone's privacy by recording personal conversations or daily activities and/or the further distribution (e.g. forwarding, texting, uploading, Bluetooth use etc.) of such material.

At all times students, while using ICT facilities and devices supplied by the school, will be required to act in line with the requirements of the Harrisville State School Student Code of Conduct. In addition students and their parents should:

- understand the responsibility and behaviour requirements (as outlined by the school) that come with accessing the department's ICT network facilities;
- ensure they have the skills to report and discontinue access to harmful information if presented via the internet or email;
- be aware that:

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- access to ICT facilities and devices provides valuable learning experiences for students and supports the school's teaching and learning programs;
- the school is not responsible for safeguarding information stored by students on departmentally-owned student computers or mobile devices;
- schools may remotely access departmentally-owned student computers or mobile devices for management purposes;
- students who use a school's ICT facilities and devices in a manner that is not appropriate may be subject to disciplinary action by the school, which could include restricting network access;
- despite internal departmental controls to manage content on the internet, illegal, dangerous or offensive information may be accessed or accidentally displayed;
- teachers will always exercise their duty of care, but avoiding or reducing access to harmful information also requires responsible use by the student.

Advice for state schools on acceptable use of ICT facilities and devices and Use of ICT systems can provide more information for families.

Preventing and responding to 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 actively engaged 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. Positive parent engagement with your child's education leads to improved student self-esteem, attendance and behaviour at school.



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

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

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

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

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

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 Harrisville State School our staff will work to quickly respond to any matters of this nature in collaboration with students and parents.

The following flowchart explains the actions Harrisville State School staff 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 response timeframes will vary depending on the professional judgment of teachers who receive the bullying complaint and their assessment of immediate risk to student/s.

Harrisville State School – Bullying response flowchart for teachers

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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

First hour Listen

- 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

Day one Document

- 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

Day two Collect

- 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

Day three Discuss

- 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

Day four Implement

- 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

Day five Review

- 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

Ongoing Follow up

- 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

Queensland Government

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying at Harrisville State School is treated with the same level of seriousness as in-person bullying.

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 Harrisville State School may face in-school disciplinary action, such as detention or removing of privileges, or more serious consequences such as suspension or exclusion from school for engaging in behaviour which 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.

Queensland Government

How to manage online incidents that impact your school

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

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

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

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

YES OR **NO**

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

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

3. Is there a potential crime?
The Queensland Criminal Code contains several applicable sections for cyberbullying. A list of potential relevant criminal offences can be viewed at Appendix 3, and include:
- unlawful stalking
- computer hacking and misuse
- possession, distribution and making child exploitation material
- fraud — obtaining or dealing with identification information
- criminal defamation.

YES

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

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

NO

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OR

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

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

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

Queensland Government

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

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

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

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

Queensland Government

Appropriate use of social media

NEW LAW: Social media age restrictions

New Australian Government laws will prevent under-16s from creating or maintaining social media accounts from 10 December 2025.

Under these laws, age-restricted social media platforms must take reasonable steps to prevent users under 16 from having a social media account and deactivate or freeze existing accounts held by people under 16.

What this means

This isn't a ban—it's a delay to give children under 16 more time to build safe, healthy digital habits.

Children under 16 will still be able to view publicly available content that doesn't require logging into an account. For example, most content on platforms like YouTube can still be accessed without an account.

The restrictions aim to:

- reduce exposure to content that may negatively affect health and wellbeing
- limit engagement with design features that encourage prolonged screen time
- support young people to develop online habits with greater safety and awareness.

The age restrictions will apply to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube. Other platforms with similar features may also be included. See the latest list External link.

Note: Online gaming services and standalone messaging apps are excluded from these restrictions under the current legislation.

Whilst 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.

Queensland Government

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

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

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

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

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

Possible civil or criminal ramifications of online commentary

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

What about other people's privacy?

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

What if I encounter problem content?

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

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

Restrictive Practices

School staff at Harrisville 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 rare 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.

Queensland Government

Critical Incidents

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

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

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

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

1. Avoid escalating the problem behaviour: Avoid shouting, cornering the student, moving into the student's space, touching or grabbing the student, sudden responses, sarcasm, becoming defensive, communicating anger and frustration through body language.

2. Maintain calmness, respect and detachment: Model the behaviour you want students to adopt, stay calm and controlled, use a serious measured tone, choose your language carefully, avoid humiliating the student, be matter of fact and avoid responding emotionally.

3. Approach the student in a non-threatening manner: Move slowly and deliberately toward the problem situation, speak privately to the student/s where possible, speak calmly and respectfully, minimise body language, keep a reasonable distance, establish eye level position, be brief, stay with the agenda, acknowledge cooperation, withdraw if the situation escalates.

4. Follow through: If the student starts displaying the appropriate behaviour briefly acknowledge their choice and re-direct other students' attention towards their usual work/activity. If the student continues with the problem behaviour, then remind them of the expected school behaviour and identify consequences of continued unacceptable behaviour.

5. Debrief: At an appropriate time when there is low risk of re-escalation, help the student to identify the sequence of events that led to the unacceptable behaviour, pinpoint decision moments during the sequence of events, evaluate decisions made, and identify acceptable decision options for future situations

Queensland Government