



Northern
Territory
Government

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Safe Schools NT Code of Behaviour



'Ensuring our schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing'

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Safe Schools NT Code of Behaviour

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Introduction

The Safe Schools NT Code of Behaviour has been produced to assist students, teachers, principals, parents and the wider school community in understanding the role they each play in ensuring our schools are safe.

Every member of the school community must play a part in ensuring a safe environment, where students have the opportunity to learn and teachers to teach.

Schools are places where positive behaviour, responsibility, respect, active citizenship and academic excellence are expected.

The Rights of School Community Members

- all students have the right to learn
- all teachers have the right to teach
- all staff have the right to perform their duties
- all parents have a right to be informed and involved
- all people have the right to be treated with respect and dignity
- it is the right of all to be safe.

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What is Expected

Students have the right to learn and be treated with respect and dignity. Equally they have a responsibility to demonstrate respect for themselves, others and the school environment.

Students are expected to:

- come to school prepared, on time and ready to learn
- participate actively in their school's education program
- be responsible for their behaviour and learning
- accept school policies
- be tolerant of differences
- inform their parents/carer of educational progress and school activities
- co-operate with other students, teachers and staff
- use digital technologies respectfully for learning purposes and to respect the rights of other users both online and offline
- refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise safety.

Parents and Carers play an important role in the education of their children and have a right to expect their children to interact and learn in a safe environment, and be informed and involved in matters regarding their children. In return, they have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all.

Parents and Carers are expected to:

- ensure their child attends school regularly, is on time, and is prepared and ready to learn
- support school staff in implementing school policies
- initiate and maintain constructive communication with school staff
- have an active interest in their child's schooling and co-operate with school staff to achieve the best learning, wellbeing and behavioural outcomes for their child.

All School Community Members are expected to:

- support the *Safe Schools NT Code of Behaviour* by taking responsibility for their behaviour and actions
- respect the rights and diversity of others and treat others fairly and with dignity
- demonstrate honesty and integrity
- show care and regard for school and other people's property
- take appropriate measures to help those in need
- resolve conflict in a non-threatening manner
- respect and comply with Australian law, especially in relation to unlawful behaviour involving weapons, alcohol, drugs, dangerous acts, vandalism, violence, verbal abuse, digital technology and sexual misconduct.

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Our Commitment

Teachers and school staff, under the leadership of their principals, provide educational programs and a safe environment in a respectful and responsible manner. They have the right to expect the co-operation of students and colleagues and be able to conduct their business in a safe environment.

Teachers and school staff are expected to:

- provide safe and supportive learning environments
- provide inclusive, engaging and meaningful curriculum and teaching catering for student needs
- initiate and maintain constructive communication and relationships with students and parents/carers
- promote awareness of school policies and guidelines
- apply school codes and policies in a consistent and fair manner
- promote the skills of responsible self-management with students
- comply with mandatory reporting guidelines.

Principals, under the direction of regional executive staff, and in consultation with the School Council, take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school.

Principals are expected to:

- provide strong leadership in the development, implementation and communication of policies and guidelines that aim to ensure a safe school environment, inclusive of articulating and communicating the consequences of unacceptable behaviour
- support staff and community members in ensuring compliance with the *Safe Schools NT Code of Behaviour* and the policies that ensure a safe school environment by facilitating professional learning to promote responsible behaviour
- communicate high expectations for individual achievement and behaviour
- review and monitor the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning
- facilitate the collection and analysis of data relating to behaviour, wellbeing and academic outcomes to inform future actions
- engage the support of external agencies when required e.g. Children and Families, Police and non-government organisations
- ensure consistency and fairness in implementing the *School Wellbeing and Behaviour Policy*.

Regional Executive Staff are expected to:

- critically evaluate and endorse school policies that ensure a safe school environment
- ensure that school plans and policies are implemented consistently, fairly and reasonably
- support principals in their responsibilities under the *Safe Schools NT Code of Behaviour* and policies that ensure a safe school environment
- facilitate the resolution of grievances.

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What is Unacceptable Behaviour

Any behaviour that impacts the safety of students and teachers or disrupts learning is not acceptable.

NT schools aim to create learning environments which are free from bullying, aggression and violence in any form.

The following student behaviour will not be tolerated and may lead to suspension and where appropriate, police involvement will occur:

- assault
- verbal abuse
- property offence
- substance use or possession
- weapons offence – possession and/or use
- stealing
- obscene or offensive acts.

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Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour

Each school has policies and guidelines which set out the range of consequences for unacceptable student behaviour which may include:

- time out strategies
- withdrawal of privileges
- detention
- restorative processes
- reflective thinking rooms
- mediation
- suspension
- police involvement.

Suspending a student is a last resort and the decision to suspend is not taken lightly. Principals have an obligation to ensure that natural justice has occurred before enforcing suspension and parents have a right to appeal.

The consequences for unacceptable behaviour must:

- provide the opportunity for all students to learn
- ensure the safety of staff and students
- assist students who exhibit unacceptable behaviour to accept responsibility for themselves and their actions.

In applying consequences for unacceptable student behaviour, the individual circumstances, including disabilities, actions of the student and the needs and rights of the school community will be considered.

Access to alternative programs and input from other agencies may be necessary for students who repeatedly behave unacceptably.

At times parents/carers also engage in unacceptable behaviour, such as threats or actual violence. Such behaviour will not be tolerated. While schools should make every effort to listen to the concerns of parents, where staff feel that the safety of themselves or others around them is compromised, then police involvement may occur.

*Safe Schools NT is the Territory's response to the National Safe Schools Framework.
For further information visit www.safeschools.nt.gov.au*