



# Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Department Education and Training (DET) Policy

This policy outlines the shared roles of parents, carers and school staff in creating a positive environment for learning. There are also other policies that set out clear standards of behaviours that are specific to school staff and students.

When parents/carers and school staff work together as one team, our students do better. Victorian Government schools want to work with parents and carers to achieve this.

The expected standards of behaviours apply to different school settings. This includes at school events, camps, excursions, outdoor activities, online learning and other places online related to schools.

## Building a positive relationship with your school

Parents/carers and school staff have a relationship that can last many years. This is an opportunity to work together to create a positive relationship in the best interests of the child.

When this relationship is built on respect and trust, students learn better and feel like they belong in the school. The foundation of a good collaborative relationship is based on:

- open and honest communication
- trust and respect
- working together
- fair and reasonable expectations by all.

To understand more about how to build a positive connection to your school, access the [Family Engagement in Learning](#) resource.

## Shared responsibility of members of the school community to behave respectfully

Positive school environments are important because everyone has the right to be safe and play a shared role in being respectful. Everyone at school, particularly staff and parents/carers, play a role in making school a better place for learning and work.

*Respectful behaviours are important in building strong, healthy and thriving school communities.*



School staff in Victorian Government schools have to follow the [Respectful Workplaces Policy](#) to build and maintain a respectful workplace, including:

- treating each other with respect and consideration
- being inclusive, valuing others and accepting their differences
- recognising the efforts and achievements of others
- considering our impact on others
- calling out and addressing behaviour that can lead to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Parents/carers can create a positive environment for learning and work by:

- modelling positive behaviour to their child/children and to the school community
- communicating politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- working with the school to achieve the best outcomes for their child/children
- communicating constructively with the school
- making use of the expected processes and protocols when raising concerns
- following the school's processes for communication with staff and making complaints
- treating all school staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

By treating everyone with respect, parents/carers and schools can make sure students feel supported and cared for.

## Respectfully raising complaints at your school

The Department supports your right to make a complaint and provides a [Parent Complaints Policy](#) to help you do this. Complaints from parents and carers help the school community by providing feedback to improve how a school operates.

Schools welcome complaints from parents and carers if they are communicated in a respectful and constructive way. They may ask that concerns be communicated in writing.

The [Family Engagement in Learning](#) page shows parents and carers how they can best talk to schools to provide feedback or complaints. Each school is different in how they prefer to talk to you– please refer to your school's guidance.

For more information, refer to your school's own complaints policy or the Department's Parent Complaints Policy.



## Unacceptable Behaviours and Consequences

Schools are positive places of learning where everyone has a right to a safe and healthy learning environment. Schools are also workplaces, and school staff deserve to work in an environment where they don't feel threatened or unsafe.

When a small number of parents and carers behave unacceptably towards a staff member or another member of the school community, this can affect their health, safety and wellbeing. The impact can also be felt by the wider school community.

Unacceptable or unreasonable behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being violent or threatening violence of any kind, including being physically intimidating, aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- speaking or behaving in a rude, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via email, social media, or over the telephone
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- discriminatory or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

If a parent or carer behaves in an unacceptable way, the school principal may contact them to talk about this further and there may be consequences.

Unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour may be escalated to the Department, where it will be assessed and managed by:

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
- requesting all communications be in writing
- written warnings
- conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
- exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
- reports to Victoria Police
- legal action.



# Respectful school communities start with respectful behaviour

Parents, carers, staff and students can help keep our school community safe, supportive and respectful.

Good relationships are based on:



Open and honest communication



Trust and respect



Working together



Fair and reasonable expectations by all

These behaviours are **not** okay in our school community:

- ⊗ Threats
- ⊗ Violence
- ⊗ Rudeness
- ⊗ Harassment
- ⊗ Discriminatory and derogatory comments
- ⊗ Aggression
- ⊗ Intimidation
- ⊗ Threatening gestures

This includes in-person, over-the-phone, email, text message, social media and online.

For more information ask your school about the **Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy**.