

# Palmerston District Primary School



District Primary School

## Student Wellbeing Procedures



Palmerston Primary

## Our Goal

Our goal for student wellbeing is to foster a safe learning environment where relationships are built on trust and every student is valued. We deliver quality education that will provide students with the skills they need to self evaluate, manage their behaviour, and build on the relationships they form with peers, teachers and the wider community.

## Our School Vision

Palmerston District Primary School strives to promote a quality learning program which recognises the uniqueness of each child. We support and challenge our students to achieve to the best of their ability and we foster a passion for lifelong learning.

## Our School Motto

Together, we learn from each other.

## Our Beliefs

A positive school climate relies on respectful behaviour from all members of the school community. We aim to create an environment where teachers can teach and students can learn without interruption. We do this by being open, transparent and proactive. We acknowledge the important partnership of students, teachers and parents to work together to achieve common educational goals.

To achieve a positive school environment the following conditions must be developed and maintained:

- A trusting relationship between students, teachers and parents
- Teaching and learning strategies which are perceived by students as useful, meaningful and worthwhile
- The promotion of excellence and the nurturing of the whole school community
- A commitment to quality teaching to achieve quality learning outcomes
- The use of **Circle Time** to promote relationship building
- The explicit teaching and implementation of **Palmerston PRIDE** core values – Participation, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Empathy
- The use of *Restorative Practices* to facilitate and empower students with problem solving conversations
- The use of quality programs such as Peer Support, Everyone Everyday and Friendly Schools Plus to explicitly teach social and emotional learning and foster inclusivity
- Sun smart awareness and promotion

Students will learn to make responsible choices within a group environment where the climate is:

- Safe
- Stimulating
- Productive
- Creative
- Caring
- Flexible
- Physically, socially and emotionally comfortable
- Based on trust and honesty

The school community contributes to the school ethos and works together to improve learning outcomes for students. The Palmerston School community were active participants in the writing of our school values.

# Our Core Values: Palmerston PRIDE

Participation

Respect

Integrity

Determination

Empathy

Teachers, students and parents model and describe many examples of displaying *Palmerston Pride*. Through the use of Friendly Schools Plus, which is a nationally and internationally recognised, successful evidence based, whole-school bullying prevention program, all students understand what is represented by actions involving Participation, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Empathy. Teachers use *Circle Time* to explicitly teach each Palmerston PRIDE value at the beginning of the year. Values are emphasised throughout the year during all aspects of the teaching and learning process. *Restorative Practices* assist teachers, students and parents to build, maintain and restore relationships and offers a way of seeing problems as an opportunity for learning. Palmerston is a *KidsMatter* school. KidsMatter aims to strengthen the mental health and wellbeing of children, reduce mental health problems amongst children, and achieve greater support for children experiencing mental health difficulties, and their families. More information about KidsMatter can be found at [www.kidsmatter.edu.au](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au)

- *Participation* – Becoming involved, having a go and cooperating with others
- *Respect* – Respect for self, others and their property
- *Integrity* – Being honest, fair, responsible and loyal
- *Determination* – Being persistent and resilient
- *Empathy* – Understanding and supporting others regardless of our differences

## Rights and Responsibilities

We all have rights and responsibilities and we are all responsible for our behaviour.

*Our right to learn and right to teach underpin our basic premise that students choose appropriate behaviour so that teaching and learning can occur without disruption.*

Staff and students work together so that students learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and accept that agreed consequences occur when they disrupt other students and staff. Staffs are trained in *Restorative Practices*.

Questions such as the following are designed to allow the student to take responsibility for their actions.

*What happened?*

*What were you thinking at the time?*

*What have you thought since?*

*Who has been harmed?*

*What needs to happen to make things right?*

Teachers have a copy of these questions for their classroom use and a copy is in each playground bag. Executive staffs support class teachers to work through problems with students so that together they make a plan to solve the problem. The School Psychologist and Special Needs Team may also be able to assist with strategies for solving the particular problem. The Special Needs Team meets each week to

discuss student needs. Each class is reviewed twice a year.

## **Circle Time**

Circle Time in classrooms provides opportunities for teachers and students to develop and build on positive, trusting relationships. In Circle Time, every child has the opportunity to have a say within the safety of the circle where there is to be no calling out, put-downs or interruptions when a child is having 'their say'.

## **Classroom Code of Conduct/Class Expectations**

Through regular class and POD meetings, students are reminded about expectations of behaviour according to the agreed upon Code of Conduct/Class Expectations. Codes of Conduct/Class Expectations are devised cooperatively between students and teachers so that students have ownership of them. Students and teachers agree to the Code of Conducts/Class Expectations and are made aware of the Classroom and Playground Student Management Procedures. Teachers make time to remind students of their responsibilities and the teacher's expectations of them in terms of work output and behaviour.

## **Classroom Questions**

Teachers can encourage our students to be more actively involved in their learning. Classroom questioning can help students to understand what they are being asked to do and what we hope they will learn in order to help them to make better decisions about how to tackle the set task. Five thinking questions that teachers can display and ask are:

*What are you learning?*

*How do you know?*

*How are you going?*

*What can you do to improve?*

*Where do you go to get help?*

## **Student Representative Council**

An additional forum for students to discuss issues and problems is the *Student Representative Council (SRC)* which meets every week. Each year group selects a boy and a girl representative to attend SRC meetings. SRC meetings give students the opportunity to voice their concerns, contribute to the organisational practices in the school, organise fundraising activities and develop their leadership skills.

## **School Programs**

### **Peer support**

Peer support is an evidence based program where 5/6 students lead groups from across Kindergarten to year 4. After training within the school the senior students run a circle time to develop the mental, social and emotional well-being of students. Topics covered can include; making and keeping friends, resilience and living positively.

### **Buddies**

Buddy sessions are arranged during the year between students in the senior school and those in the preschool and junior school. This enables experiences for growth in cooperation and leadership for the older students, and support and friendship for the younger students. Activities and work are prepared

according to the needs of individual groups and include activities such as reading, maths games, writing, art and craft and play.

*WALT (We are learning today)* or *Learning Intentions* are the learning objectives for the lesson. Research shows that students are more motivated if they understand not just the task but also the learning objective of the task. *WILF (What I'm looking for)* or *Success Criteria* are the measures against which the children and teacher judge how well they are doing. Learning is more effective if students are asked to help create the success criteria. By inviting children to help create the success criteria, we are involving them in their own learning and encouraging them to evaluate their performance.

Teachers also use individual goal setting with students. These can include a range of learning areas such as reading, spelling and writing and/or other learning areas. Students who reach their goals are recognised for their achievements.

# Managing Classroom Behaviour

## Low Level Attention Seeking Behaviours



## Low Key Response from Teacher

### Essential skills

All our staffs are trained in 'The Essential skills for teachers'. Effective classroom management and behaviour strategies help establish quality learning environments where high levels of intellectual quality and significance are generated for students. The ten essential skills for classroom teacher's professional learning have been identified as the fundamental skills on which all other management and behaviour support strategies are built. The Essential skills include: establishing expectations, signal to attend, scanning, giving instructions, positive body language, cueing with descriptive encouraging, selective attending, redirect to learning, giving a choice and follow through (ACT Government Education and Training Directorate, 2010).

Teachers at Palmerston recognise the importance of dealing with the problem and not the student. Transitions between classes and lessons are managed with minimal distraction and teachers wait for 100% attention from all students before beginning a lesson. Teachers manage their classes with minimal distractions which may include reminders to set to task such as using a student name, giving a gesture, a look, pausing, or planning to ignore a specific behaviour.

### Class Time out in PoD

**Class Time Out:** 5 – 10 minutes – Stage 1 Time Out

Student counselled by teacher to return to positive behaviour.

Teachers can use the below questions to assist the student to return to learning

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought since?
- Who has been harmed?
- What needs to happen to make things right?

Teacher to record in daybook

*If misbehaviour continues in same session/day, then:*

### Buddy Class Timeout

Whole session Stage 2 Time Out to a designated buddy classroom

- Class teacher sends student to buddy class with an escort
- Student takes work with them
- Classroom teacher records information on the Student Management Grid located in Student Management box in classroom
- Quiet thinking and working time in buddy teacher's classroom until the end of session
- Student returns to class teacher for counselling on how to return to positive behaviour

If the behaviours continue for more than one day, teachers should work with their executive teacher and

the student to put practices in place that will assist the student to remain engaged and making positive choices. It may include:

Classroom consequences (not to be put with other teachers on playground duty)

Parents are informed by class teachers

*If misbehaviour continues in same session/day, then:*

## **Executive Teacher Timeout**

For serious infringements of others' rights such as verbal assault, harassment, physical assault, vandalism.

- Teacher notifies executive and executive removes student from class
- Teacher sends work for student to complete whilst in time out in executive office
- Executive teacher returns student to class teacher for re-entry discussion between teacher, student and executive
- Executive teacher completes a Timeout Plan with the student and maintains for record keeping purposes
- The executive teacher may contact parents by phone if needed

If misbehaviour continues in same day:

Class teacher notifies SLC, who will then refer the child to deputy principal or principal.

## **Executive Intervention**

### **For High Level / Extreme Behaviour**

For serious violations of others' rights such as abusive behaviour, dangerous behaviour, uncontrolled and uncooperative behaviour.

For physical or verbal abuse directed at the teacher, the student may be withdrawn for the day and parents asked to accompany their child to school the next day to discuss the issue. Staff will consult with executive teachers to reflect on their classroom practices and to discuss strategies to assist these students.

Teachers will contact parents to enlist their support in dealing with consistent behaviour problems. *All staffs recognise the importance of a close relationship between home and school.*

Students who present extremely disruptive/ongoing misbehaviour may use a *behaviour book* to record positive and negative sessions. They may also be placed on an individual behaviour plan which highlights their areas to develop whilst recognising the strengths they do have. These plans are made in conjunction with the family and the student.

This book forms a strong communication link between home and school allowing both teachers and parents to support the student in solving their problems. Three-way interviews between student, parent and teacher may also be conducted at regular intervals to discuss the issues and management procedures as well as to report on progress made.

# Classroom Management

## Proactive Strategies

- Clear expectations
- Negotiated class rules
- Circle Time
- PRIDE values
- Praise

Step	Step type	Action
1	Low Key Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Reminder</li> <li>• Pause</li> <li>• Look</li> <li>• Gesture</li> <li>• Eye Contact</li> </ul>
2	Face to Face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop lesson</li> <li>• Face student</li> <li>• Reminder given</li> </ul>
3	Choice	Student chooses between two best learning options.
4	Implied Choice	Choice made by teacher.
5	In Class Time Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour is discussed with a written agreement made for re-entry into group.</li> <li>• Teacher records event.</li> <li>• Failure to move to the time out table will result in moving to Step 6.</li> </ul>
6	Out Of Class Buddy Time Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students complete any incomplete work and revisit agreement.</li> <li>• Teacher records event and contacts parents/carers.</li> <li>• Failure to move to the “Buddy” class will result in being moved to executive office to complete any incomplete work and revisit plan.</li> <li>• Teacher records event.</li> </ul>



Step	Step type	Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/carers are contacted.</li> </ul>

- At any stage the student may choose to re-direct themselves to on task behaviours, moving from higher to lower steps
- The lower the step, the less formal the contract:
  - **Informal Contracts** – Between student and teacher for continual low level attention seeking behaviour.
  - **Formal Contracts** – Between parents, student, teacher and executive for continual defiance, power or revenge.

# Classroom Student Management

Steps	Student Action	Teacher Action	Executive Action
Minor Disruption	Rudeness/disrespectful Annoying others Disrupting others learning Refusal to follow instructions	Redirect student Remind student of class rules Counsel Time out in class (5 to 10 minutes) Teacher to record in daybook	
Continuing Minor Disruptions	Continuing in actions stated above	Time out in Buddy Class (to end of session) with work given by class teacher Class teacher records incident in <i>student management folder</i> Parents notified if necessary	Executive will view 'Time Out Folder'
Serious Infringements of Others' Rights	Verbal assault/harassment Physical assault/harassment Vandalism	Student removed from class to executive's office Provide work for the student Re-entry discussion with student about expectations in class	Time out – executive's office Executive contacts parents and records all the incident/s Inform class teacher of student progress/outcomes
Serious Violations of Others' Rights	Abusive behaviour Dangerous behaviour Uncontrolled and uncooperative behaviour	Send for executive immediately Follow up consequences with executive	Parent contact Suspension (Formal, Informal)

## **Involvement of School Psychologist/ Special Needs Team**

At times it may be necessary to involve the School Psychologist and/or Special Needs Team to facilitate positive behaviour. Should this be necessary, parents will be contacted and involved in discussions about management procedures and strategies which they can implement at home.

## **Congratulate and Celebrate**

Consistent intervention and the certainty of a consequence are important aspects of student management at Palmerston. Staff involved in dealing with student misbehaviour will track/record student behaviour. They will also:

- Give the student positive feedback when they behave responsibly
- Liaise regularly with students on how they are going with making responsible choices
- Acknowledge responsible behaviour via PRIDE awards given at school assemblies
- Correspond with parents through formal communication at parent/ teacher interviews and written reports about responsible student behaviour
- Make phone calls to parents/ carers of students who display exemplary behaviour

Class teachers use a variety of strategies to promote positive behaviours and promote student wellbeing.

## **Related Policies and Procedures**

The *Education Act 2004* states that ACT public schools will promote and seek to provide a supportive learning environment in which all students can expect to feel safe. Guiding principles for a safe and supportive learning environment include the development of school procedures based on the consultative review with students, parents, and carers, in alignment with current ACT Government policies.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the following ACT Department of Education and Training policies:

- Countering Bullying, Harassment and Violence in ACT Public Schools (2007)
- Providing Safe Schools Policy P-12
- Countering Sexual Harassment in ACT Public Schools

A copy of these policies can be found on the department's website:

[http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications\\_and\\_policies](http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies)

# **Managing Playground Behaviour**

## **Minor Disruption**

Teacher reminds students about appropriate behaviour and playground rules. A 'corridor conference' is held using the Restorative Practice Questions and the incident is resolved with all parties. Playground duty teachers may inform the classroom teacher for their information. Classroom teachers are NOT expected to solve the issue.

## **Continuing Minor Disruptions and Middle Level Disruptions**

Teacher reminds students about appropriate behaviours, and counsel. Student may walk with them if required. A blue slip is completed and given to the SLC who records the blue slip and keeps for records. Once a student has three referral sheets, the student has a meeting with the executive teacher who works through the issues. Parents are informed.

The student's class teachers are informed of the outcomes for the students involved.

## **Serious Infringements of Others' Rights, Extreme Violence**

The duty teacher will send a red card to the staff room and an executive will attend to the incident. Teachers keep the student/s with them if possible. Teachers record the incidents on a playground referral sheet as soon as is practicable.

The Executive teacher will counsel the student/s and further investigate the incident. Where there is an incident that has more than one student involved and a relationship has been harmed, the executive teacher will interview the perpetrator and the victim and record the details as well as having a meeting with parties involved to work towards restoring the relationship. The executive teacher will contact parents of all students involved in harmful playground incidents and advise of the consequential outcomes whilst being confidential about other students' names. Playground incidents will be recorded by the executive teacher.

Students may be suspended and parents brought in for conversations on student behaviour expectations. The Network Leader will be informed, as may the School Psychologist and other agencies.

## Playground Management Chart

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Playground Teacher Action</b>	<b>Classroom Teacher</b>	<b>Executive Action</b>
Standard/minor playground issue	Remind students about appropriate behaviour and playground rules; counsel students using restorative questions if required May inform classroom teacher	No action required	No action required
Continuing Minor Disruptions or Middle Level Disruptions	Record incident on blue playground referral sheet (in your bag) Pass on referral sheet to executive teacher who records and keeps in <i>student management folder</i> in the executive office Let classroom teacher know you have referred to executive	May choose to talk to student re the blue slip and provide some counselling or strategies Follow up with executive if necessary	Executive checks folder daily and records blue slips Once the student has three blue slips the executive follow up with the student, keeps records and calls parents if necessary Restorative conference usually occurs at recess or at lunchtime Teacher informed of outcome
Serious Infringements of Others' Rights	Red card sent to front office and an executive will attend. Keep student with you if possible Work with executive and record incident in <i>playground management folder</i>	No action required (dealt with by exec)	Executive will counsel the student and further investigate the incident Ensure the incident is recorded in folder Executive will contact parents and classroom teacher Appropriate consequence established
Serious Violations of Others' Rights	Send for executive immediately Follow up consequences with executive	No action required (dealt with by exec)	Parent contact Suspension (Formal, Informal)

# Managing Bullying

Bullying is an unacceptable behaviour at Palmerston Primary and is viewed as a breakdown between relationships. Through Circle Time, Social and Emotional Learning, the Friendly Schools Plus program and Restorative Practices, teachers work towards fostering positive relationships between students and other students and staff.

## Friendly Schools Plus

One of the most effective means to reduce bullying among young people is to enhance their social and emotional understandings and competencies, in developmentally appropriate ways throughout their schooling, using a whole-school approach. Friendly Schools Plus is an evidence based program that addresses the social and emotional learning of young people, both formally through explicit classroom pedagogy and learning strategies and informally through the development of a whole-school culture, organisation and structures that reinforce and uphold these essential understandings, skills and competencies (Cross, Thompson & Erceg, 2013).

The Friendly Schools Plus resource is designed to address three key aspects of students' school experiences shown to be related to improved social and emotional development: promoting peer relationships, promoting positive teacher-child relationships, and explicit teaching related to emotions, social knowledge and social skills. The components of Friendly Schools Plus are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Social decision-making

## Everyone, Everyday

Palmerston District Primary School implements the Everyone, Everyday inclusion program. This program promotes awareness about people with disability and their capabilities and contributions, and fosters respect for their rights and dignity. The Everyone, Everyday program resource includes learning activities that are designed to develop positive attitudes and core values in the school community relating to inclusion and valuing difference. This program has specific lessons designed to cater for a variety of learners from Kindergarten to year 6.

When bullying occurs, it is evident that these relationships have been harmed and restorative meetings between the victims and the perpetrators are held to work on restoring the harm that has occurred.

The school's student management processes are also used to deal with behaviours and consequences.

## Definitions

**Bullying:** Bullying is a product of social dynamics and can be defined as the repeated negative actions by individuals or groups against a target individual or group; and involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can take different forms – verbal, physical, social, cyber or psychological. Actions can be observable or hidden.

'Bullying should not be confused with teasing, rejection, random acts of violence or physicality and conflict. While children will often tease or fight, this bickering should not be confused with bullying' (Michael Gross).

**Harassment:** Negative behaviour intended to annoy or trouble another individual, which may be based on obvious differences such as gender, race, religious or cultural beliefs, physical difference, sexual orientation,

ability or disability and socio-economic status. It may be a one-off incident between individuals or groups or may continue over time.

**Violence:** Incidents where a person is intimidated, abused, threatened, physically assaulted or where property is deliberately damaged by another person. It is an extreme use of force often resulting in injury or destruction. Violence does not necessarily involve an imbalance of power.

## Elements of bullying

Bullying contains the following elements:

- Harm is intended
- There is an imbalance of power
- It is often organised and systematic
- It is repetitive, occurring over a period of time; or it is a random but serial activity carried out by somebody who is feared for this behaviour
- Hurt experienced by a victim of bullying can be external (physical) or internal (psychological)

## Anti Racism and Anti Sexual Harassment Officers

The school has trained Anti Racism and Anti Sexual Harassment contact officers for students.

These staff members have undertaken professional development to enhance their skills in providing a safe and supportive environment. They ensure that the appropriate procedures are used to resolve the problem and promote effective communication and liaison with families.

## Types of bullying

Bullying can be either physical or non-physical and is ongoing. Referring to the above *Elements of Bullying*, bullying may include the following types:

*Physical bullying* can include biting, hair-pulling, hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting, locking in a room, or any other form of physical attack. It also includes damaging a person's property. This category is also a form of violence.

*Non-physical bullying* can be verbal, which includes abusive telephone calls, cyber-bullying (on-line and text messaging), extorting money or material possessions, intimidation or threats of physical violence, name-calling, racist remarks or teasing, sexually suggestive or abusive language, spiteful teasing or making cruel remarks and spreading false and malicious rumours.

*Non-verbal/Non-physical bullying* includes making rude gestures and mean faces, manipulating relationships and ruining friendships; purposefully and often systematically ignoring, excluding and isolating someone; and sending (often anonymous) poisonous notes.

*Violence* can be premeditated fighting, attacking someone with a weapon or any other type of physical assault not already covered in this document.

## What bullying is not

There is much negative behaviour which, although being distressing to those involved, are not classified as bullying. The following situations are often confused with bullying:

## **Mutual conflict**

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students, but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict may evolve into a bullying situation at some point if it is not resolved, for example, when one person becomes targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

## **Social rejection or dislike**

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, this does not constitute being bullied. This does not, however, lessen the seriousness of the incident or the subsequent consequences.

## **Signs of bullying**

Some ongoing signs that **may** be observed when a child is being bullied include:

- An unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- Feeling ill in the mornings
- A decline in the quality of school work
- Becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- Crying at night, having nightmares
- Asking for money or starting to steal (to pay the bully)
- Refusing to talk about what is wrong
- Having unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- Beginning to bully other children or siblings
- Becoming aggressive and unreasonable

These signs can also be displayed when there are changes in a child's life at home or when they have experienced change, such as a new school or new friendships.

## **Procedures for staff dealing with bullying incidents**

When dealing with incidents of bullying:

- Staff will respond to all incidents of bullying
- All incidents will be recorded on the Playground Referral Sheet and these will then be passed to the executive team
- A restorative process will be undertaken by victims, perpetrators and bystanders
- The progress of victims and perpetrators will be monitored by the school executive team
- The Palmerston District Primary School Student Management Procedures will be followed for continued inappropriate behaviour

## **Procedures for students**

It is important that all students:

- Understand that any form of bullying is not acceptable
- Report incidents of bullying to their class teacher, the teacher on playground duty or a playground mediator
- Keep on reporting incidents of bullying until it stops



## **Procedures for parents**

If you suspect your child is a victim of bullying:

- Encourage your child to discuss the situation
- Tell your child that bullying is wrong and remind them they have the right to feel safe and happy
- Make sure your child knows how to get help and support at school
- Ask your child what they would like you to do
- Contact your child's teacher
- If the issue continues after the class teacher has addressed it, contact the executive staff of the junior or senior school. If continued, contact the School Psychologist, Deputy or Principal

The school will liaise with parents on a regular basis until their child feels safe.