Supporting Student's Behaviour Needs

The importance of keeping schools safe for everyone

The Department of Education and Training is committed to ensuring a safe environment for students, staff and visitors in our schools.

To achieve this goal, it is important that schools have appropriate and relevant information pertaining to known risks associated with the environment, students and staff.

From time to time parents may be asked to provide information to the school regarding their child's behaviour or special needs. This information enables schools to provide a supportive learning environment for students and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone at the school.

Managing health and safety

Responding to the health and safety concerns of our schools is a complex task. There are many issues faced in keeping both students and staff safe.

Schools develop management plans to address health and safety concerns and provide an opportunity for parents and staff to work together to identify how students can be best supported and receive the highest quality education.

Supporting students

Behaviour involves words and acts that communicate need. Schools recognise this and aim to support individual student needs.

Parents provide vital information on the type of support that individual students require and schools value this knowledge and understanding. This information is important in ensuring that parents and schools work together to support the needs of the student and other students and take the learning environment into consideration.

Valuable information that parents can share include how the child behaves in familiar and unfamiliar environments, strategies that are effective in supporting appropriate behaviour and approaches to avoid.

Parents are asked to provide this and similar information on the Application to Enrol form to help facilitate a smooth transition for the student into the new school setting. If it is identified at this time that a student's participation will be enhanced by a Behaviour Support Plan, the Plan will be developed upon enrolment.

Some behaviour of individual students potentially pose a challenge to effective teaching and learning.

Generally, Behaviour Support Plans are developed when it is identified that there is a need for ongoing support for the student. Occasionally it may not be until after enrolment that the need for a Behaviour Support Plan is identified as being beneficial. At these times, a Plan will be developed and adapted as required.

Student Behaviour Support Process

Parents and schools need to work together to develop a Plan to support the needs of the student.

The Department is aware that there are often complications associated with growing up which have an impact on a student's behaviour. There are also environmental factors that could impact on a student's behaviour. It is important that all relevant information is shared to ensure an effective Support Plan is developed.

A member of the school executive will discuss the process with parents and work closely with all involved to ensure the Plan is effective and supported by the school. The Plan will focus on providing strategies to ensure the best possible outcomes for the student.

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This process of well defined steps ensures that everyone involved clearly understands the process, leading to improved decision making.

1. Behaviour and trigger identification

Parents and staff working with the student will identify the triggers that could possibly be causing the behaviour. This could include discussing any incidents concerning behaviour, medical needs or other environmental issues which appear to be impacting on the student's behaviour.

Questions may take into account the frequency of incidents, their duration and the impact on the student and others.

2. Management strategies

Behaviour Support Plans contain strategies to promote effective learning, valued participation and to manage factors that may impact on behaviour.

Strategies will be developed based upon the triggers and causes identified as contributing to the behaviour.

The strategies contained in the Plan provide appropriate guidance to those working with the students in understanding how best to support the student's needs. The Plans are overseen in schools by the principal.

3. Communication of the Behaviour Support Plan

The Plan is more successful when both the parents and the school apply the strategies within the Plan. This consistency is important in assisting the student to be able to communicate their needs effectively. Parents will be given opportunities to be involved and will be consulted in the development and implementation of the Plan. A copy of the Behaviour Support Plan will be provided to parents.

4. Plan reviews

Ongoing support and review of the Behaviour Support Plan ensures that they continue to be effective and are only used for as long as they are required. A scheduled review point for parents and schools is included in each Plan.

If it is identified that a Behaviour Support Plan is not effective, regional personnel can provide further assistance to schools by facilitating a review of the Plan. Regional personnel can engage additional support including disability program consultants; student welfare consultants; and/or any other personnel nominated by the region if required.

Further information

Your school principal is available to discuss any concerns you may have regarding the student welfare and discipline policies, risk assessment and behaviour management processes.

You can also refer to the Department's website, **www.det.nsw.edu.au** for additional information on behaviour programs, disability programs and enrolment of students in government schools.

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