



Ripley Valley State School

Student Code of Conduct

2024 - 2028

Every student succeeding

Every student succeeding is the shared vision of Queensland state Schools. Our vision shapes regional and School planning to ensure every student receives the support needed to belong to the School community, engage purposefully in learning and experience academic success.

Queensland Department of Education
State Schools Strategy 2019-2023

Purpose

Ripley Valley State School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff, where students have opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire values supportive of their lifelong wellbeing.

This Code of Conduct for Students is designed to facilitate high standards of behaviour so that the learning and teaching in our school can be effective and students can participate positively within our school community. Ripley Valley State School is committed to providing a disciplined, high performing and enjoyable learning environment for all students.

MOTTO

Empowering Future Excellence

VALUES

Collaboration

Inclusion

Integrity

Innovation

Empowerment

Contact Information

Postal address:	110 Botany Drive, South Ripley, 4306
Phone:	07 3294 2888
Email:	admin@ripleyvalleyss.eq.edu.au
School website address:	https://ripleyvalleyss.eq.edu.au/
Contact Person:	Naomi Meerwald (Principal)

Endorsement

Principal Name: Naomi Meerwald

Principal Signature:

Date: 12/2/2024

P/C President Name:

P/C President Signature:

Date:

Contents

Purpose	2
Contact information	2
Endorsement	3
Learning and Behaviour Statement	5
Whole School Approach to Discipline	6
Legislative Delegations	12
Disciplinary Consequences	13
School Policies	15
Restrictive Practices	23
Critical Incidents	25

Learning and Behaviour Statement

All areas of Ripley Valley State School are learning and teaching environments. We consider behaviour management to be an opportunity for valuable social learning as well as a means of maximising the success of academic education programs. Our school-wide framework for managing behaviour is Positive Behaviour for Learning – PBL.

Through our Student Code of Conduct, shared expectations for student behaviour are plain to everyone, assisting Ripley Valley 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:

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

We are Responsible
We are Respectful
We are Learners

Ripley Valley State School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff, where students have opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire values to “Empower Successful Learning for Life”.

MOTTO

Empowering Future Excellence

Whole School Approach to Discipline

Ripley Valley State School uses Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) as the multi-tiered system of support for discipline in the School. This is a whole-school approach, used in all classrooms and programs offered through the School, including sporting activities and excursions.

PBL is an evidence-based framework used to:

- analyse and improve student behaviour and learning outcomes
- ensure that only evidence-based practices are used correctly by teachers to support students
- continually support staff members to maintain consistent school and classroom improvement practices.

At Ripley Valley State School we believe discipline is about more than punishment. It is a word that reflects our belief that student behaviour is a part of the overall teaching and learning approach in our School. Our staff take responsibility for making their expectations clear, for providing supportive instruction about how to meet these expectations and strive to use behavioural incidents as opportunities to re-teach.

The development of the Ripley Valley State School Student Code of Conduct is an opportunity to explain the PBL framework with parents and students, and gain their support to implement a consistent approach to teaching behaviour. The language and expectations of PBL can be used in any environment, including the home setting for students. Doing everything we can do to set students up for success is a shared goal of every parent and school staff member.

PBL Expectations

Our staff are committed to delivering a high quality of education for every student, and believe all adults in the school, whether visiting or working, should meet the same three Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) expectations in place for students:

- We are Respectful
- We are Responsible
- We are Learners

Students

Below are examples of what these PBL expectations look like for students across the school (and are not limited to these). In addition, each classroom will have their own set of examples to help students and visitors understand the expectations and meet the standards we hold for everyone at Ripley Valley State School.

SCHOOL WIDE EXPECTATIONS TEACHING MATRIX

	ALL AREAS	CLASSROOM	ONLINE	PLAYGROUND	STAIRWELL/LIFTS	TOILETS	BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL
BE RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment appropriately • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Ask permission to leave the classroom • Be on time • Be in the right place at the right time • Follow instructions straight away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Sit still • Enter and exit room in an orderly manner • Be prepared • Complete set tasks • Take an active role in classroom activities • Keep work space tidy • Be honest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in use of approved online sites and educational games • Be courteous and polite in all online communications • Report any unacceptable behaviour to a teacher • Post only appropriate content online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in school approved games • Wear shoes and socks at all times • Be sun safe; wear a broad brimmed hat • Be a problem solver • Return equipment to appropriate place at the sports bell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rails are for hands • Walk one step at a time • Carry items • Keep passage ways clear at all times • Use the lift phone in a genuine emergency only • Move peacefully in single file • Use lifts only with permission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands after using the toilet and before eating food • Use toilets during breaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use own bike/scooter only • Wait inside the gate or on the footpath until the bus or car stops • Use appropriate safety equipment such as bike helmets • Walk bike/scooter in school grounds • Leave school promptly
BE RESPECTFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect others' personal space and property • Care for equipment • Clean up after yourself • Use polite language • Wait your turn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise your hand to speak • Respect others' right to learn • Talk in turns • Be a good listener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect others' right to use online resources free from interference or bullying • Keep any usernames or passwords private • Follow all teacher instructions about keeping private information off online sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play fairly – take turns, invite others to join in and follow rules • Care for the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk quietly and in an orderly way so that others are not disturbed • Allow others to enter and leave the lift in an orderly manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect privacy of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait your turn • Keep personal belongings nearby
BE A LEARNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show an open mind to learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready to learn each day • Attempt new tasks • Ask for help when required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete online learning tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join new games and activities 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete home learning tasks

These expectations are communicated to students via a number of strategies, including:

- PBL weekly focus across the school
- Behaviour lessons conducted by classroom teachers.
- Principal conveys targeted focus on parade.
- Fast and frequent acknowledgements
- Successes publicly acknowledged and rewarded on Parade

Ripley Valley State School implements the following proactive and preventative processes and strategies to support student behaviour:

- A dedicated section of the school newsletter and Facebook page, enabling parents to be actively and positively involved in school behaviour expectations
- The School Leadership and PBL team members' regularly provide information to staff and parents, and support to others in sharing successful practices
- Comprehensive induction programs in the Ripley Valley State School Student Code of Conduct delivered to new students as well as new and relief staff
- Individual support profiles developed for students with high behavioural needs, enabling staff to make the necessary adjustments to support these students consistently across all classroom and non-classroom settings.

Reinforcing Expected School Behaviour: Acknowledgement System

At Ripley Valley State School, communication of our key messages about behaviour is backed up through reinforcement, which provides students with feedback for engaging in expected school behaviour. A formal recognition and monitoring system has been developed. This acknowledgement system is designed to increase the quantity and quality of positive interactions between students and staff. All staff members are trained to give consistent and appropriate acknowledgement and rewards.

At Ripley Valley State School, we set high expectations for positive behaviour and publicly recognise students who have achieved our behaviour expectations. These students are recognised through:

- Verbal praise and acknowledgement
- Teachers or staff contacting parents face-to-face or via telephone to acknowledge student effort
- School wide acknowledgment systems – Class Dojo points
- End of Semester behaviour badges
- Behaviour postcards
- Pawsitive points

Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

1. Re-directing low-level and infrequent problem behaviour

When a student exhibits low-level and infrequent problem behaviour, the first response of school staff members is to remind the student of expected school behaviour, then ask them to change their behaviour so that it aligns with our school's expectations.

Our preferred way of re-directing low-level problem behaviour is to ask them to think about how their behaviour is impacting on their own and others' learning. This encourages students to reflect on their own behaviour, evaluate it against expected school behaviour,

and plan how their behaviour could be modified so as to align with the expectations of our school community.

2. Targeted behaviour support:

Each year a small number of students at Ripley Valley State School are identified through our data as needing additional assistance in the way of targeted behaviour support. In most cases, the problem behaviours of these students may not be immediately regarded as severe, but the frequency of the behaviours may put these students' learning and social success at risk if not addressed in a timely manner.

3. Intensive behaviour support:

Ripley Valley State School is committed to educating all students, including those with the highest behavioural support needs. We recognise that students with highly complex and challenging behaviours need comprehensive systems of support. The school support team may;

- facilitate a Functional Behaviour Assessment for appropriate students;
- work with other staff members to develop appropriate behaviour support strategies;
- monitor the impact of support for individual students through ongoing data collection;
- make reasonable adjustments as required for the student; and
- work with the School Behaviour Leadership Team to achieve continuity and consistency.

The school support team has a simple and quick referral system in place. Following referral, a team member contacts parents and any relevant staff members to form a support team and begin the assessment and support process. In many cases the support team also includes individuals from other agencies already working with the student and their family, a representative from the school's administration and regional behavioural support staff.

Consideration of Individual Circumstances

Staff at Ripley Valley State School take into account students' individual circumstances, such as their behaviour history, disability, mental health, wellbeing, religious and cultural considerations, home environment and care arrangements when teaching expectations, responding to inappropriate behaviour or applying a disciplinary consequence.

In considering the individual circumstances of each student, we recognise that the way we teach, the support we provide and the way we respond to students will differ. This reflects the principle of equality, where every student is given the support they need to be successful. Some students need additional support to interpret or understand an expectation. Others may benefit from more opportunities to practise a required skill or behaviour. For a small number of students, the use of certain disciplinary consequences may be considered inappropriate or ineffective. These are all matters that our teachers and principal consider with each individual student in both the instruction of behaviour and the response to behaviour.

Our teachers are also obliged by law to respect and protect the privacy of individual students, so while we understand the interest of other students, staff and parents to know what consequence another student might have received, we will not disclose or discuss this information with anyone but the student's family. This applies even if the behavioural incident, such as bullying, involves your child. You can be assured that school staff take all matters

such as bullying, very seriously and will address them appropriately. We expect that parents and students will respect the privacy of other students and families.

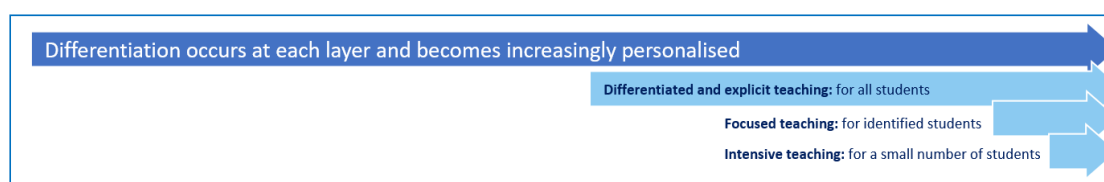
If you have concerns about the behaviour of another student at the school, or the way our staff have responded to their behaviour, please make an appointment with the Administration Staff to discuss the matter.

Differentiated and Explicit Teaching

Ripley Valley State School is a disciplined school environment that provides differentiated teaching to respond to the learning needs of all students. This involves 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 Ripley Valley State School vary what students are taught, how they are taught and how students can demonstrate what they know as part of this differentiated approach to behaviour. These decisions about differentiation are made in response to data and day-to-day monitoring that indicates the behavioural learning needs of students. This enables our teachers to purposefully plan a variety of ways to engage students; assist them to achieve the expected learning; and to demonstrate their learning.

There are three main layers to differentiation, as illustrated in the diagram below.



For example, in the PBL framework, Tier 1 is differentiated and explicit teaching for all students, Tier 2 is focussed teaching for identified students and Tier 3 is intensive teaching for a small number of students. Each layer provides progressively more personalised supports for students.

The PBL Expectations Matrix, illustrated earlier, is used as a guide to unpack the expectations in various areas of the school. Using this matrix, the class teacher works with all students to explain exactly what each of the expectations look, sound and feel like in their classroom. Weekly PBL (expectation) lessons are used in every classroom to unpack these expectations for the students and staff.

Focused Teaching

Approximately 15% of all students in any school or classroom may require additional support to meet behaviour expectations, even after being provided with differentiated and explicit teaching. These students may have difficulty meeting behavioural expectations in a particular period of the day or as part of a learning area/subject, and focused teaching is provided to help them achieve success.

Focused teaching involves revisiting key behavioural concepts and/or skills and using explicit and structured teaching strategies in particular aspects of a behaviour skill. Focused teaching provides students with more opportunities to practise skills and multiple opportunities to achieve the intended learning and expected behaviour.

Support staff, including teachers with specialist expertise in learning, language or development, work collaboratively with class teachers at Ripley Valley State School to provide focused teaching. Focused teaching is aligned to the PBL Expectations Matrix, and student progress is monitored by the classroom teacher/s to identify those who:

- no longer require the additional support
- require ongoing focussed teaching
- require intensive teaching.

Intensive Teaching

Research evidence shows that even in an effective, well-functioning school there will always be approximately 5% of the student population who require intensive teaching to achieve behavioural expectations. Intensive teaching involves frequent and explicit instruction, with individuals or in small groups, to develop mastery of basic behavioural concepts, skills and knowledge.

Ripley Valley State School is committed to educating all students, including those with the highest behavioural support needs. We recognise that students with highly complex and challenging behaviours need comprehensive systems of support. The school support team;

- May facilitate a Functional Behaviour Assessment for appropriate students;
- May work with other staff members to develop appropriate behaviour support strategies;
- monitors the impact of support for individual students through ongoing data collection;
- makes reasonable adjustments as required for the student; and
- works with the School Behaviour Leadership Team to achieve continuity and consistency.

The school support team has a simple and quick referral system in place. Following referral, a team member contacts parents and any relevant staff members to form a support team and begin the assessment and support process. In many cases the support team also includes individuals from other agencies already working with the student and their family, a representative from the school's administration and regional behavioural support staff.

Some students may require intensive teaching for a short period, for particular behaviour skills. Other students may require intensive teaching for a more prolonged period. Decisions about the approach will be made based on data collected from their teacher or teachers, and following consultation with the student's family.

For a small number of students who continue to display behaviours that are deemed complex and challenging, then individualised, function-based behaviour assessment and support plans and multi-agency collaboration may be provided to support the student. This approach will seek to address the acute impact of barriers to learning and participation faced by students who are negotiating a number of complex personal issues.

Legislative Delegations

Legislation

- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)
- [Criminal Code Act 1899 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Judicial Review Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Right to Information Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(Cwth\)](#)

Delegations

Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, state school principals are responsible for “controlling and regulating student discipline in the school”.

Principals are afforded a number of **non-delegable powers** to assist them to meet this obligation, including the authority to suspend, exclude or cancel the enrolment of a student at the school. These decision-making responsibilities cannot be delegated to other staff in the school, such as deputy principals.

The details of these responsibilities are outlined in the legislative instruments of delegation and instruments of authorisation provided below:

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 Director-General's delegations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 Minister's delegations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 Director-General's authorisations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2006 Minister's delegations](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 Director-General's delegations](#)

Disciplinary Consequences

Consequences for inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour

Ripley Valley State School makes systematic efforts to prevent problem student behaviour by teaching and reinforcing expected behaviours on an ongoing basis. When unacceptable behaviour occurs, students experience predictable consequences. Our school seeks to ensure that responses to unacceptable behaviour are consistent and proportionate to the nature of the behaviour. A referral form is used to record all minor and major problem behaviour.

Minor and Major Behaviours

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

- **Minor** problem behaviour is handled by staff members at the time it happens
- **Major** problem behaviour is referred directly to the school Administration team

Minor behaviours are those that:

- are minor breeches of the school rules;
- 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 part of a pattern of problem behaviours; and
- do not require involvement of specialist support staff or Administration.

Minor problem behaviours may result in the following consequences:

- a minor consequence that is logically connected to the problem behaviour may include (but is not limited to), removal from an activity or event for a specified period of time, partial removal, individual meeting with the student, apology, restitution, detention or work completion.
- a re-direction procedure. The staff member takes the student aside and:
 1. names the behaviour that the student is displaying;
 2. asks the student to name expected school behaviour;
 3. asks them the impact the behaviour is having on their own and others' learning and or states and explains the school rule if necessary and;
 4. gives positive verbal acknowledgement for expected school behaviour.

Major behaviours are those that:

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

Major behaviours result in an expected immediate referral to Administration because of their seriousness. When major problem behaviour occurs, staff members calmly state the major problem behaviour and remind the student of expected school behaviour. The staff member then fills out the office referral form and escorts the student to Administration.

Major problem behaviours may result (and are not limited to) the following consequences:

- contacting parent or caregiver
- non-participation in activity
- alternative play area
- detention
- suspension
- intervention
- exclusion

Relate problem behaviours to expected school behaviours

When responding to problem behaviours, staff members are expected to ensure that students understand the relationship of the problem behaviour to expected school behaviour. One method that staff members might use to achieve this is to have students:

- articulate the relevant expected school behaviour
- explain how their behaviour differs from expected school behaviour,
- describe the likely consequences if the problem behaviour continues; and
- identify what they will do to change their behaviour in line with expected school behaviour.

Should problem behaviour be repeated, the staff member may not repeat the discussion/explanation process but simply remind the student of the consequences of their problem behaviour.

Ensuring consistent responses to problem behaviour

At Ripley Valley State School staff members authorised to issue consequences for problem behaviour are provided with appropriate professional development and/or training. Through training activities, we work to ensure consistent responses to problem behaviour across the school.

Students also receive support about how to respond when other students display problem behaviour, and the courteous way to respond when a staff member re-directs their behaviour or consequences are applied for problem behaviour.

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:

- 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 Ripley Valley State School, the use of any SDA is considered a very serious decision. It is typically only used by the Principal when other options have been exhausted or the student's behaviour is so dangerous 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 school days to confirm, amend/vary or set aside the original SDA decision by the Principal.

The appeal process is a thorough review of all documentation associated with the SDA decision and provides an opportunity for both the school and the family to present their case in the matter. Time is afforded for collection, dissemination and response to the materials by both the school and the family. It is important that the purpose of the appeal is understood so that expectations are clear, and appropriate supports are in place to ensure students can continue to access their education while completing their SDA.

School Policies

Ripley Valley 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

Temporary removal of student property

The removal of any property in a student's possession may be necessary 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 procedure** 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.

The following items are explicitly prohibited at Ripley Valley 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)
- imitation guns or weapons

- potentially dangerous items (e.g. blades, rope)
- drugs** (including tobacco)
- alcohol
- aerosol deodorants or cans (including spray paint)
- explosives (e.g. fireworks, flares, sparklers)
- flammable solids or liquids (e.g. fire starters, mothballs, lighters)
- poisons (e.g. weed killer, insecticides)
- 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**).

Responsibilities

State school staff at Ripley Valley State School:

- do not require the student's consent to search school property such as lockers, 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 school bag, prior to seeking consent to search from a parent or calling the police;
- 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;
- 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);
- 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 Ripley Valley State School

- 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 Ripley Valley 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 Ripley Valley 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 Ripley Valley 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

Mobile Phone Policy

This document outlines the guidelines for students and parents/community mobile phone users while on school premises to ensure students' safety and right to privacy and that learning is not interrupted.

Students and Mobile Phones

It is assumed that any child bringing a mobile phone to school needs it for safety in travelling to and from home but not during the school day.

Our stance on the possession of mobile phones at school is underpinned by the following considerations:

- Mobile phones are very expensive and highly attractive devices and therefore at risk of being stolen or used inappropriately at school
- Use of mobile phones by children can be disruptive to teaching, learning and school activities in and out of the classroom.
- Mobile phones use cellular data meaning that students can access the internet without being monitored through the school filter network.

As a result, mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms, in the playground and on excursions/camps.

Procedures

The following procedures **must** be followed when bringing a mobile phone to school.

- Phones (with the student name marked on them) are to be turned off and submitted to the office on arrival (prior to first bell) at school where they are checked in via a register
- Phones will be stored safely, at the office in the Administration building
- They are to be collected and signed out at the end of the school day
- No student mobile phones are permitted on camp or on an excursion as students are in the direct care of the teachers and school staff.

* It is understood that parents have a genuine need to make urgent contact with their children. For this reason the main school phone is attended during school hours. Phone messages for students will always be relayed to the relevant student. Furthermore, the office staff will contact parents when children are sick or injured or other urgent situations arise.

* In the event that students have a mobile phone in their possession, during class time or in the playground they will be referred to the Administration team who will place the phone in security for the remainder of the day.

Normal school disciplinary consequences apply to breaches of these guidelines.

NO RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE TAKEN BY THE SCHOOL SHOULD LOSS, DAMAGE OR THEFT OF MOBILE PHONES OCCUR

Please note:

- It is recommended by the Department of Education and Training that disciplinary action (including suspension or recommendation for exclusion) be taken against any student who:
 - photographs or video other individuals without their consent or who send harassing or threatening messages.
 - uses a personal technology device to record private conversations, ordinary school activities (apart from social functions like graduation ceremonies) or violent, illegal or embarrassing matter capable of bringing the school into public disrepute is considered to be in breach of this policy
 - use a personal technology devices to record inappropriate behaviours or incidents (such as vandalism, fighting, bullying, staged fighting or pranks etc) for the purpose of dissemination among the student body or outside the school, by any means (including distribution by phone or internet posting) resulting in a culture of distrust and disharmony.
 - even where consent is obtained for such recording, capture by personal technology devices, images or sound on the school premises or elsewhere and disseminate to others, if it is done for the purpose of causing embarrassment to individuals or the school, for the purpose of bullying or harassment, including racial and sexual harassment, or where without such intent a reasonable person would conclude that such outcomes may have or will occur
 - breach the policy by being involved in recording and/or disseminating material (through text messaging, display, internet uploading or other means) or are knowingly the subject of such a recording.

Parents/Caregivers in School Grounds and Mobile Phones

We appreciate the support that parents and caregivers offer by helping in the classrooms, attending assembly and other school functions. We know that parents are concerned that students' learning is not interrupted.

Therefore it is requested that parents and caregivers have mobile phones turned to silent while in the school grounds, allowing incoming calls to be recorded as 'missed calls' and returning the calls at an appropriate time such as at the end of your volunteer session or when you leave the school site.

Preventing and responding to bullying

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 Ripley Valley State School our staff will work to quickly respond to any matters raised of this nature in collaboration with students and parents. After a report is made the matter is investigated. Consequences are applied in line with the findings of the investigation.

Appropriate use of social media

The internet, mobile phones and social media provide wonderful opportunities for students to network and socialise online. While these technologies provide positive platforms for sharing ideas, they also have the potential to cause pain and suffering to individuals, groups or even whole communities. Students under the age of 13 should not be accessing social media.

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.

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 (Cth) 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.

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

Ripley Valley 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 are encouraged to approach any staff member with whom they feel comfortable sharing their concerns, regardless of their role in the school. All staff at Ripley Valley 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 class activities, withdrawal from social events or celebrations or more severe punishments such as suspension or exclusion from school.

Restrictive Practices

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.

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.