# Safe and Supportive Schools policy

# Frequently asked questions: Parents and Carers

**What should I do if I believe that my child is experiencing bullying, harassment or violence?**

Parents, carers and students are encouraged to contact the school immediately and work with their classroom teacher (primary school), year coordinator (high school and college) or principal to address the concerns. Parents, carers and students can also visit the Bullying. No Way! website (<http://bullyingnoway.gov.au>) for information about countering bullying, harassment and violence. For urgent counselling assistance please contact Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800.

**What does the SASSCO for students role entail?**

The student Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer (SASSCO) is the trusted person to whom students and teachers can bring complaints about bullying, racist, sexist and discriminatory behaviours which they have experienced or observed in the school. The SASSCO will investigate the complaint, work with the involved students and monitor their progress.

**How do schools support and promote diversity?**

The Directorate supports diversity education programs in Canberra public schools targeted to support students from all backgrounds, including same sex attracted, gender diverse and multicultural backgrounds. The Australian Curriculum requires teachers to include learning about diversity, inclusion and acceptance in their lessons. Schools collaborate with the Minister’s Student Congress to run an annual National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence activities for students from all Canberra schools. Each school has identified, trained Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer for students who are able to assist in the reporting and addressing complaints regarding bullying, harassment and violence in schools.

**What are restorative measures?**

Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and reconciliation with the victim. Restorative responses to incidents are conciliatory in nature and aim to restore a positive learning environment for all parties.

**What should I do if I am not satisfied with the outcome of school-based processes?**

Schools are best placed to address incidents of bullying, harassment and violence in collaboration with students, parents and carers. School interventions are based on the understanding that children and young people are growing and learning how to become responsible citizens. Research indicates interventions that work towards building or repairing relationships lead to better outcomes for all students involved, however, schools will take strong actions if there is an immediate threat to the safety of students. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of school-based procedures you should contact the school principal or the Office for Families and Students on 62073723.

**Where can I find the Safe and Supportive Schools policy?**

The *Safe and Supportive Schools* policy and procedures can be found at <http://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z>

**What support can schools access to develop school specific processes?**

Schools are encouraged to discuss the needs of their community with their Network Student Engagement Team or the Safe and Supportive Schools Executive Officer.

**Where can I find more information about safe and supportive school environments?**

**Student Wellbeing Hub**

<https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/>

**Bullying. No way!**

[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

**Mindmatters**

[www.mindmatters.edu.au](http://www.mindmatters.edu.au)

**Kidsmatter**

[www.kidsmatter.edu.au](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au)

**Safe Schools Coalition Australia**

[www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au](http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au)

# More Information

Refer to the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy and Procedures www.education.act.gov.au

For more information contact the Safe and Supportive Schools Executive Officer 6207 0457 or ETDStudentWellbeing@act.gov.au