



What is a Behaviour Support Plan?

Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) assist schools to provide additional support and guidance to identified students.

Why make a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)?

It is a school-based document designed to assist individual students who have experienced harm, are at risk of harm, or have caused harm to others.

This may include students who have been diagnosed with severe behaviour disorders, students who have bullied others, students who have been bullied, students who require additional assistance because they display difficult, challenging or disruptive behaviours, as well as students who can benefit from additional wellbeing support.

A Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) can help ensure that students and staff feel safe, valued and connected to their school community. An effective BSP contributes to building respectful relationships, resilience, and well-adjusted students who are able to learn effectively.



Who benefits from a BSP?

Schools and students can benefit from an effective BSP. For example:

- Clearly stating expectations and planned support for a student in writing, demonstrates the commitment of the school to the student's wellbeing needs.
- Behaviour change in the student occurs more readily when the focus is on support, building the skills needed for pro social behaviour, and increasing the student's wellbeing.
- Problem behaviours are gradually reduced as triggers and cues preceding the unwanted behaviours are identified and addressed.
- Previously unknown causes or triggers of problem behaviour may be identified while gathering information and writing the plan. Issues can then be effectively addressed.
- Specialised guidance indicating how to respond to a student's challenging behaviour, helps to provide boundaries, consistency and consequences for the student, reducing the need for punishment and in turn reducing stress for teachers.
- A sense of harmony and/or safety to a classroom and school may be restored.

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Who is responsible for BSPs?

One person at the school, or sub-school should be responsible for making, monitoring and reviewing all BSPs. For example:

- **Primary schools and special schools:** The Assistant Principal
- **Secondary schools:** The Student Welfare Coordinator, Year Level Co-coordinator or Assistant Principal

This person, the BSP Coordinator, initiates and coordinates the steps below. This person will also typically lead any Student Support Group (SSG) meetings held in relation to the BSP.

Writing an effective BSP

The most effective BSPs are developed when eight steps are followed:

1. Gather relevant information about the student.
2. Convene a meeting of relevant school staff and the student's parents.
3. Convene a meeting of relevant school staff to draft the BSP.
4. Refine the BSP.
5. Sign the BSP.
6. Provide a copy to staff, parents and if appropriate, the student.
7. Review the BSP.
8. Conclude the BSP.
9. For further information see **Guidelines for Writing a BSP.**

Caution

The effectiveness of a BSP relies on identifying the underlying causes of the student's problem behaviours. To identify problem behaviours, school staff should consult their student services support officer, the student's parents or guardians, psychologist or other appropriate specialist, or professional involved with the student. The failure to identify the underlying issue or issues can lead to problem behaviours continuing, escalating or being replaced by other problem behaviours.

It also needs to be understood that a student's behaviour will often deteriorate before it improves when a BSP is introduced. Rewards and reinforcements used to promote pro social behaviour must be immediate and at a high frequency in the early stages of a BSP for maximum success, especially with younger students.

