

Guidelines for Writing a BSP

A Behaviour Support Plans (BSP) should be developed by a select group, including school staff, parents/guardians or carers and other relevant professionals.

1. Gather relevant information about the student

Ask school staff and other relevant parties to assist in collating information. This may include the: Principal, Assistant Principal, student's class or homeroom teacher, previous teachers, student's parents/guardians or carers, student services support officer, psychologist, counsellor or school chaplain, speech pathologist or other wellbeing, welfare or health professionals employed by the school.

Send the BSP Student Questionnaire or selected questions to all relevant parties. Email can be an effective means of communication. Allow adequate time for staff, parents and others to gather information, but provide a deadline for completion to enable information to be used at the BSP meeting.



2. Convene a meeting with relevant school staff & the student's parents

Meeting

The BSP coordinator and school staff who know the student well are required to attend this meeting. The student's parents may attend, depending on family circumstances and the issues. If key people cannot attend this meeting, ensure all relevant information has been collected.

Roles and responsibilities

Allocate roles and responsibilities. For example:

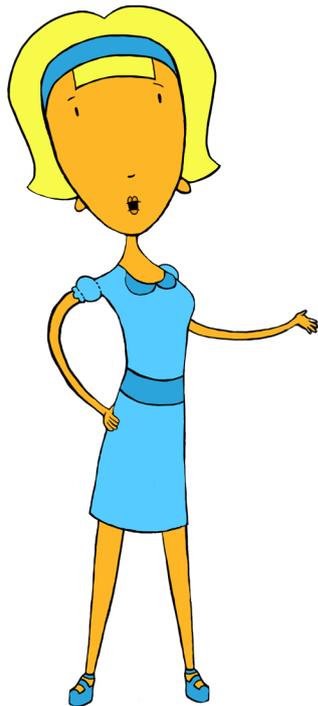
- **BSP coordinator:** Lead meeting attendees through the BSP Student Questionnaire, drawing together the collective knowledge of attendees including information gathered prior to the meeting.
- **Note taker:** Delegate one meeting attendee to act as note taker, recording all information gathered during the meeting.
- **Meeting attendees:** Respond to the BSP Student Questionnaire assisting relevant information to be documented, and then review notes to ensure all key material is included.

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Questions

Present all relevant information known about the student at this meeting. School staff need to be mindful of privacy issues for the student and family. Ask:

- What information, if any, is missing?
- Who is going to follow up on missing information?
- Can the plan be drafted at the next meeting?
- When can we next meet, as a group, to draft the BSP?
- Who will attend?



3. Convene a meeting of relevant school staff to draft the BSP

Meeting

The BSP coordinator and relevant school staff are required to attend this meeting. If all parties are not able to be present at this meeting then ensure their input is included.

Roles and responsibilities

- **BSP coordinator:** Leads the group in drafting the BSP on the BSP template, drawing upon information gathered at the previous meeting.
- **Meeting attendees:** assist the coordinator to draft the BSP.

Hint

A data projector may be useful to enable all attendees to see what is being documented.

Review

Review all collected information to identify key areas of need, in order to prepare an effective BSP.

Please Note:

This graphic indicates information that needs to be written into the BSB plan. We suggest you refer to these guidelines when completing the BSP.

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Pertinent background information

Keep information in this section to a minimum. Only list information that school staff need to know to assist with implementing the plan.

For most students this section may be blank, or include only a diagnosis, or significant life event that is impacting on the student.

Do not list all background information, or information of a sensitive or confidential nature.

Be mindful that whilst parents know that their child has some difficulties it can be distressing to see this in print and parents must receive a copy of this BSP.

Behaviours in need of support

a. Target behaviours

Review the problem behaviours. Ensure each attendee has the same understanding of the behaviours. Write a description if necessary.

Rank the behaviours. Physical violence, threats of violence, bullying and discrimination should be the top priority, followed by inappropriate behaviours that occur frequently, through to support behaviours for students with wellbeing needs. It can be helpful to develop a baseline of the frequency of each behaviour to establish whether it is an actual or a perceived issue. This is achieved through record keeping or observation of the student for set periods of times.

Identify those behaviours that will be the target, or focus, for this BSP. One to three is best, and no more than five. Other behaviours can be included when the initial target behaviours are resolved, and an updated BSP may then need to be created.

Wording is important.

- Ensure listed target behaviours are specific and measurable.
- Write the behaviour you would like to see, where possible. For example, 'Keep hands and feet to self' rather than 'No hitting or kicking'.
- Use positive language. For example, 'stop verbal aggression' could be 'Promote pro-social speech by helping the student to reduce swearing, yelling and use of 'put downs' with peers and younger students'.

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b. Known warning signs of impending behaviour

Review information from the BSP Student Questionnaire. Identify warning signs.

List warning signs. Aim to document conditions or situations that may lead to the problem behaviour, to help teachers intervene before the unwanted behaviour occurs.

If warning signs are unknown or unpredictable add them to the BSP as they are detected.

c. Known triggers of impending behaviour

Review information from the BSP Student Questionnaire. Identify triggers.

List triggers. Aim to document conditions or situations that may lead to the problem behaviour, to help teachers to remove these triggers before the unwanted behaviour occurs.

If triggers are unknown or unpredictable add them to the BSP as they are detected.

d. Preventative strategies and techniques

Review BSP Student Questionnaire. List techniques that can be implemented immediately. For example:

- Move close to the student, and quietly remind them what they should be doing.
- Keep talk to a minimum, support communication with hand gestures and pointing.
- Use the student's name and calmly redirect the student, rather than reprimand.
- Help the student refocus on the work '(Student's name) I'll help you get started.'
- Identify a learning strength the student has and link the strength to the task.
- Set a working agreement with the student, which may include a choice.
- Maintain respect and a liking for the student but foreshadow a warning for the problem behaviour.
- Remind the class of the relevant classroom or playground rule.
- Use consequences aimed to resolve the problem or restore the harm.
- Signal the implementation of down time. Ask the student to move to a calm and safe space, or to take a note to another teacher asking them to provide 10 minutes of quiet time.



Proactive strategies and techniques

Identify situations and/or environments that relate specifically to the student's behaviour. Only fill in content for relevant situations and ignore irrelevant ones.

Consider possible problem situations and environments, such as when CRTs are present, environments where supervision may be reduced, or in secondary schools, when movement between classes takes place or when the student goes to the toilet. For example, the student may have no issues at break times but need specific supervision or modifications during physical education lessons. Therefore, physical education sessions would be included in this column, but not recess and lunch.

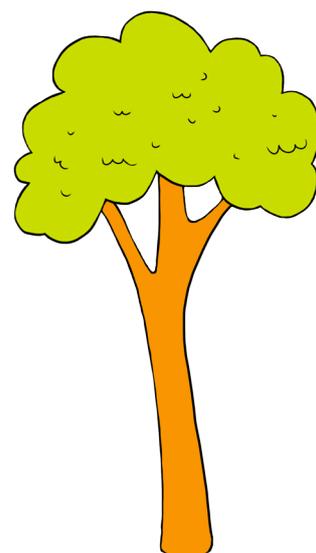
a. Target behaviours

List target behaviours with their situations or environments, as described.

b. Strategies

Think about the cause of the behaviour/s to help in developing effective strategies. Ask:

- **What may be causing the behaviour/s?** These may be identified in Step 1 and 2 of the BSP Student Questionnaire. The 'cause' may need to be carefully reviewed with the student support services officer, parents, or the wellbeing, welfare or health professional involved.
- **What can we do about it?** Tailor strategies to suit the student's individual needs. Focus on reducing the cause of the problem. Both short term and long term solutions should be included. Consider the role a parent or carer might provide.



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Ensure the listed strategies are holistic and achievable for the student. Consider:

- **Research wellbeing information.** Visit the DEECD website, the free resources section of the Psych4Schools website at www.psych4schools.com.au, review information held at school and knowledge gained from experience.
- **Allow down time** or calming options.
- Ensure appropriate **academic interventions, allowances and modifications** are being implemented. For example, for students who are slow learners, teacher questions might focus more on knowledge and remembering. Whereas for more able students, allowing them to formulate questions can help to create deeper and richer understandings.
- Ensure allowances are made for appropriate **supervision** of the student. For example, at recess and lunchtime a ground plan may be needed to set limitations on play or activity areas and who the student plays or associates with and when.
- What might be one thing that can reduce 'pressure' or conflict, or help the student feel more connected **at home** or if living between homes, with all adults? What help and assistance can be provided?

Think about **how the strategies are worded**.

- Strategies or interventions must be specific. Rather than writing 'social skills group', write 'Attend Ms. Low's Term 3 social skills group focusing on turning taking, and playing by the rules.'

c. Beginning date—Concluding date

What is the intervention timeline? How long will the strategy be in place? When will it begin and end? This helps when reviewing and modifying the BSP. It also helps school staff and the student know that the plan is not open-ended, that real change, through appropriate support, is expected. Many interventions are based on a five to ten week time frame. The maximum intervention may occur over several years, but term-by-term reviews help indicate that real change is expected. When real change occurs it should be celebrated or acknowledged.

d. Who is responsible for implementation?

The BSP coordinator, relevant staff members and other persons will help implement and monitor the strategy. Be specific and use staff members' names, rather than their year level or subject area.



Good behaviour recognition

a. What works to promote good behaviour for this student?

Examples may include:

- Provide immediate positive feedback. (sticker, stamp, house points, praise)
- Implement outcomes from a rewards chart.
- Grant extra time at a favoured activity. (computer, gardening)
- Acknowledge pro-social behaviour at assembly or class meetings.

Reward systems and praise don't work for all students, especially those who are very defiant. The following can work well:

- Show the student you like and respect them, but not their behaviour.
- Foreshadow warnings and privileges, and give some control to the student.
- Use labelled encouragement. This describes the behaviour you are seeing 'I like the way you have started on your own' delivered in a neutral voice, and is said to the student quietly and privately.
- Offer a responsibility for on-going co-operative behaviour.

b. How will we know if the recognition is successful?

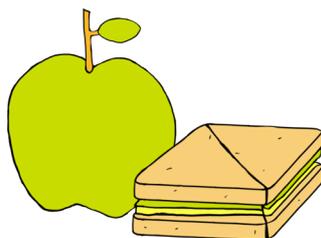
There needs to be a system such as an electronic diary to record or graph behaviour.

c. Who is responsible for providing good behaviour recognition?

Be specific and use staff members' names, rather than their year level or subject area.

d. When and how often is behaviour recorded?

For example, the Year Level Coordinator, Mrs. Barnes will record entries twice a day at 11am and 3.20pm.



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Consequences

a. List consequences

Identify what will happen if the student does not follow the rules or continues to display challenging behaviour. This may be a series of **statements** or a **step-by-step** list.

For example, the series of **statements** could be:

- Regular student discipline procedures will be followed. (This may include additional steps for this particular student, but will include additional steps for all students with disabilities or disorders).
- Address problem behaviour directly and immediately. Use the student's name, name what they are doing wrong, and ask them to stop.
- Continue to ensure all consequences aim to resolve the problem or restore the harm.
- Use restorative practice techniques.

The **step-by-step** approach could be:

1. Regular classroom discipline warning system.
2. If the student does not stop the behaviour, call a 'buddy' teacher or a senior staff member. The student may be asked to leave the classroom.
3. If the student refuses to leave, the class teacher will remove the class. The 'Buddy' teacher or senior staff member will stay with the student in the classroom.
4. Student conference with Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal.
5. Call student's parents to inform of behaviour.
6. Set a short-term verbal agreement for appropriate behaviour over the next day or two and/or until you meet again.

b. Who is responsible for giving consequences?

Be specific and use staff members' names, rather than their year level or subject area.

c. When and how often are statements or approaches recorded?

For example, the Year Level Coordinator, Mrs. Barnes will record entries twice a day at 11am and 3.20pm.

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Crisis plan

a. Behaviours

List observable behaviours or circumstances that would lead to the crisis plan being enacted. For example, if the following behaviours are observed:

- Physical threat
- Highly agitated—such as raised voice, making a fist, clenching and unclenching hands
- Violent or threatens violence.

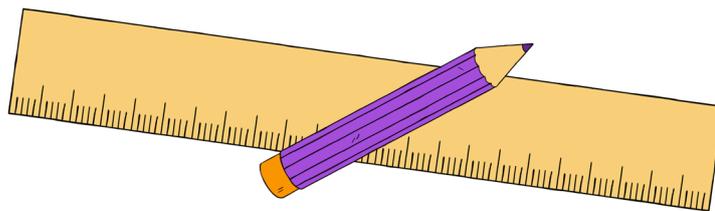
b. Actions

List the steps you will take when the student is ‘at risk’ of harm or harming others, or when a major incident occurs, such as, serious threats, actual violence, or when the student is out-of-control.

Consider whether mandatory and/or legal requirements need to be followed? Do agencies need to be contacted to support the student?

In extreme emergencies police and/or ambulance support should be included in this plan. For example:

- Call for assistance from Assistant Principal, Principal or senior staff member.
- Separate student from other students—either by removing the student, or if this is not possible removing the other students.
- Call parents to collect student. If unable to contact them, call others on contact list according to specified order.
- Call 000 if necessary.
- Log incident with the DEECD emergency management, phone (03) 9589-6266.



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c. Who is responsible?

List who is responsible for each step above. Be specific and use staff members' names, rather than their year level or subject area. For example:

1. Class teacher: Mr John Smith
2. Class teacher or Assistant Principal/Principal: Mr John Smith, Ms Kathy Locke, Mrs Simone Black
3. Principal/Office Manager: Mrs Simone Black, Ms Joyce Hunt
4. Principal/Assistant Principal: Mrs Simone Black, Ms Kathy Locke,
5. Principal: Mrs Simone Black

Student's preferred school staff contacts

List staff members the student trusts, likes and works with most frequently.

One or two of these staff members may be able to help restore calm if nothing seems to be working or the situation is in crisis. Safety of all concerned is a priority at all times.

Review

a. Review date

Write the date and time of the BSP review meeting.

b. Who is involved?

List staff members involved in the review process. The parents and student may be included.

c. How is it monitored?

Monitoring options include: teacher observation, student self-reflection, a behaviour diary and/or chart, term achievement list and Student Support Group meetings led by the BSP Coordinator. A combination of monitoring ideas will often be most effective. Actions that require the student to reflect on or self report positive achievements will often help.

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4. Refine the BSP

Have relevant staff members, parents, other school professionals and if possible the student provide feedback on the plan, before it is finalised and signed off.

Modify as required.

5. Sign the BSP

Have key staff members agree to and sign the plan—including the Principal.

Have the parent, and student agree to and sign the plan.

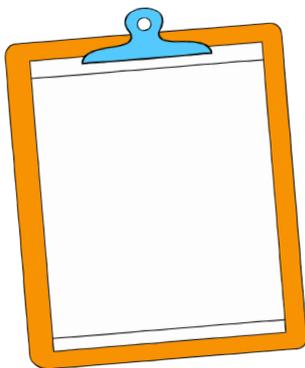
6. Provide a copy to staff

Distribute to all staff who have contact with the student.

Confidentiality is paramount. Ensure that all staff store the plan securely.

Talk staff through the plan, ideally at a staff or department meeting.

Create a copy of the plan for the casual relief teacher (CRT) or the emergency teacher file.



7. Review the BSP

Meeting

Those responsible for monitoring the student's behaviour and the effectiveness of the plan should attend the review meeting. If all parties cannot be present at this meeting, those present review the plan based on information gathered from the missing parties. If this is the case, the reviewed plan should be shared with all parties before it is finalised.

Roles and responsibilities

The BSP Coordinator is responsible for reviewing the BSP.

Why review the BSP?

Regular reviews will ensure the BSP stays relevant. Reviews ensure appropriate behaviours are being targeted, and effective strategies and interventions implemented to support the student in changing their behaviour. New information can also be added.

When should the BSP be reviewed?

Trial the plan for a week or two before full implementation. Depending on the student or the plan, the plan may need to be revised every two to four weeks and/or at least once a term.

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Emergency reviews

Emergency reviews, prior to the set review date, may need to occur in the following circumstances:

- On professional advice (such as a doctor, psychologist)
- Significant change in the student's circumstances
- Challenging behaviour is escalating
- Additional challenging behaviour occurs
- The student is at risk of expulsion.

Considerations

When reviewing the plan consider:

- Is it working? If not, why?
- Are all staff following the plan?
- Do we need to update rewards?
- Were our expectations for the student's behaviour initially too high (does the bar need to be set lower)?
- Do the strategies match the student's needs?
- Has an important factor or step been left off the plan?
- Has something changed? Timetable, staff member availability, family circumstances and so on.
- Is information missing? Who will collect this information?
- **Rewrite or fine-tune the plan**, then follow steps 5-7.

8. Concluding the BSP

Roles and responsibilities

The Principal or Assistant Principal can sign off on the plan's completion.

Goals

The BSP aims to help ensure that students feel safe, valued and connected to their school community. General observation that harmony has been restored or diminished is a good indicator that the plan is achieving its goals.

Conclusion

The BSP can be concluded when significant positive change has been demonstrated over four weeks or more, without incident, through improved behaviour and wellbeing, and new learning is being demonstrated.

At this stage the plan can be concluded and the student monitored for the following term.

