Behaviour schools guidelines

Definition

Behaviour schools are educational settings established to support students with severely disruptive behaviour. A behaviour school provides intensive behavioural and educational support for students who have exhausted all other behaviour support provisions available to the school, and/or for whom a risk assessment indicates a behaviour school placement is required.

Purpose

A behaviour school will provide:

- access to the full curriculum, at stage appropriate level, with adjustments depending upon the student’s literacy, numeracy and social needs
- teachers who will collaborate with the student, their family and the census school to develop individual integration and transition plans, learning plans and support plans
- structure and support to reach set behaviour targets before reintegration into census school
- pathways to other education or employment settings as appropriate.

General operational principles

A behaviour school will ensure:

- development of an individual plan targeting specific educational and behavioural needs
- development of an integration plan, negotiated with the census school upon entry to the behaviour school, that maintains connections with the census school and community
- development of a transition/return plan to enable the successful transition to a less restrictive setting when the student is ready
- the transition plan is supported by teachers from the behaviour school
- a maximum class size of seven students supported by a teacher and a school learning support officer.

Goals

The goals of the behaviour school are to:

- assist students to reflect on and understand their behaviour and its consequences
- reinforce and develop appropriate attitudes and behaviours
• build capacity and understanding in students on how to re-engage in mainstream schooling
• foster positive work habits and prevent recurrence of inappropriate behaviours
• facilitate transition to other educational or employment settings, as appropriate
• provide students with the opportunity to have a successful educational experience
• provide skills development opportunities and support for the parents/carers, and for census school staff.

Target population

Behaviour schools provide a range of specialist programs for students in Years 5-10. Each operational directorate may determine the target population based on referral needs, for example targeting Years 5-8, based on local data. The target population must be monitored carefully and reviewed to accommodate any change in referral trends. School Services will oversee this process.

Operational guidelines

Referral process:
• census school identifies students with severely disruptive behaviours
• referral to school counsellor or school psychologist for assessment
• referral for additional behaviour support or placement via School Services
• parents/carers must give consent for the referral of their child to a behaviour school
• referral forwarded in accordance with departmental placement procedures
• behaviour school principal, or delegate, to be a member of the placement panel
• student and parent/carer to visit behaviour school prior to acceptance of placement offer
• student enrolment into the behaviour school is preceded by an interview with the behaviour school principal or delegate, the student and the parents/carers
• expectations and role of the school, the student and parents/carers will be clearly communicated by the behaviour school principal, or delegate
• NSW Department of Education confirmation of mental health problem/disorder is not required for student referral to a behaviour school
• generally students are placed in the behaviour school for a maximum of four school terms
• census school must negotiate a transition/return plan with the behaviour school
• exceptional circumstances may require a lengthier enrolment, subject to negotiation using departmental placement protocols.
Short term and shared enrolment of students

- A student should be enrolled in one school only at any given time. For a variety of reasons, such as parents visiting a locality for a brief period or a student being involved in an integration program, a student enrolled at a particular school may need to attend another school for a short period of time.
- The student remains enrolled in the census school.
- The census school shares the enrolment with the behaviour school using electronic record keeping (ERN and ebs).
- An integration model is developed in consultation with the census school. If the census school is not a suitable option for integration, the census school principal, in consultation with School Services, and the behaviour school principal, will seek a suitable integration/transition setting.
- Integration and transition plans for all students are to be recorded and made available to the integrating setting.
- Formal student reviews should be conducted once per semester.
- Ongoing meetings with parents/carers and relevant agencies involved in the student's program should be encouraged.
- Referral information and tracking data should be maintained regularly to monitor progress.