

# Respect at school

Information for students, families and schools

An Easy Read guide



## How to use this guide



A group of people worked together to write this guide.

The group included:



- people with disability



- their families and carers



- Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)



- Inclusion Australia.



They wrote this guide for the Australian Government Department of Education (DoE).



When you see the word 'we', it means the people who wrote this guide.



We wrote this guide in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

**Bold**  
Not bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of important words we use in this guide on page **6**.

There is a list of other words we use on page **31**.



This Easy Read guide is a summary of another guide.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.

You can find the other guide on our website.



[www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/information-resources-students-disability-and-their-caregivers](http://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/information-resources-students-disability-and-their-caregivers)



You can ask for help to read this guide.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

## What's in this guide?

Words we use in this guide	6
Who this guide is for	11
What this guide is about	12
How to treat everyone with respect	15
What respect looks like at school	20
What happens when there is no respect	23
Tips for students	25
Tips for parents and carers	26
Getting support to have your say	27
What teachers and schools need to do	28
Word list	31

## Words we use in this guide



We have some words we always use in this guide.

Knowing what these words mean can help you understand this guide better.

### Disability



A disability can affect your:

- brain
- body
- **senses.**



You use your senses to understand the world around you.



When you have a disability, part of your body doesn't work:

- very well
- how it should.



A disability can affect:

- what you can do
- how much you can do on your own.

A disability can affect how you:



- communicate



- learn



- do things.

## Education



When you get an education, teachers support you to learn:

- new skills
- knowledge.





## Educational institution

An educational institution is somewhere you go to learn.

This could be a:



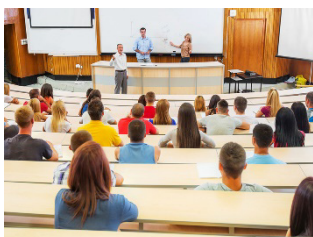
- pre-school or kindergarten



- primary school



- high school



- university



- training organisation, such as TAFE.





An educational institution might be public – this means it's run by the government.



Or it could be private – this means another organisation owns and runs it.



### **Rights**

Your rights are rules for how you can expect other people to treat you.

This includes educational institutions.

### **Standards**

Standards are what we use to measure how well something is done.

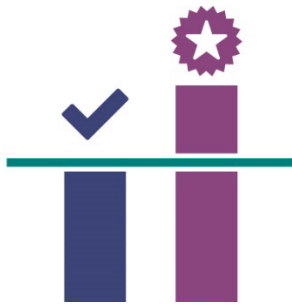


We look at:

- what is done
- what the standard is.



Standards help us make sure things work well.



Educational institutions must:

- reach the standard
- try to do better than the standard.



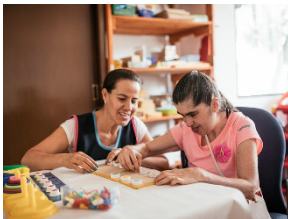
## Students

Students are people who learn with an educational institution.

This includes when they learn:



- in a classroom



- at home



- at work.



Students can be people:

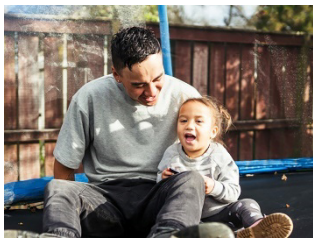
- with disability
- without disability.

## Who this guide is for



This guide is for students with disability.

It also has information for:



- parents



- carers



- teachers



- schools.

## What this guide is about



Students with disability have rights.



You should be treated well at school.

And schools should take steps to keep you safe.



In Australia, it is against the law to treat a student unfairly because they have a disability.



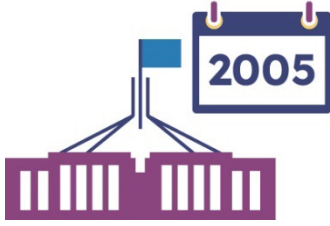
Or if they make a **complaint** that someone is treating them unfairly because they have a disability.



When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:



- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.



In 2005, the Australian Government published the Disability Standards for Education (DSE).



The DSE are standards for the education of students with disability.

The DSE talk about 2 important things:



- the rights of students with disability



- what educational institutions must do.



The DSE protects students with disability.



This guide is about how to treat each other with respect at school.



## How to treat everyone with respect



There are different ways you can treat everyone with respect.



You need to treat everyone how you want to be treated.

Everyone is different.



For example, everyone learns:

- in different ways
- at their own speed.



Teachers should think about the best way to teach each student.



And you should think about the best way you can learn with other students.

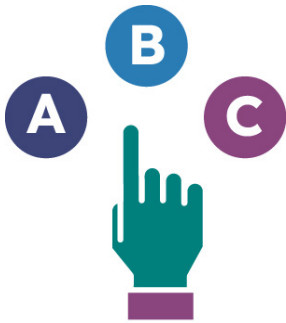


Everyone does things in their own way.

This means you should try to understand:

- what is going on in someone's life
- how they might feel.

Everyone has the right to:



- choose what they want to do



- have their own privacy



- have their own personal space.



This means each person can choose if they want someone to:

- hug them
- touch them
- shake their hand.



You shouldn't judge a person for what they choose or like.



And it's important to value each other's opinions.

This makes everyone feel more confident to share what they:

- think
- feel.



You accept people with disability.

You accept people:



- who have different opinions and beliefs



- from different cultures and backgrounds.

You also accept people for who they are,  
including their:



- **gender identity**



- **sexuality.**

Your gender identity is not about your body being male or female.



It is about who you feel you are as a person.

Your gender identity can be:

- male
- female
- a combination of these
- none of these.



Your sexuality is who you:

- love
- are attracted to.



You might not:

- agree with everyone
- like everyone.



But you can still treat everyone with respect.

# What respect looks like at school



Respect at school is about how everyone:

- treats each other
- connects with each other
- supports each other to take part.



Respect at school is also about the relationships everyone has with each other.

This includes:



- students



- parents and carers



- teachers



- **support staff** – people who help teachers work with students with disability.





It helps when everyone wants the same result.



It's important for everyone to talk to each other.

And make decisions as a group.



Even if you don't agree with another person,  
try to treat them with respect.

You can always talk to them another time.



When something is **inclusive**, everyone can take part.



Respect at school is when everyone:

- includes each other
- can take part in activities.

Respect at school is when:



- people listen to you



- you feel happy inside.



Respect at school is also when you feel like you can make **boundaries**.

Boundaries are rules you make so other people know how to act towards you.



And respect at school is also when everyone can trust each other.

## What happens when there is no respect



When there is no respect at school, you might feel alone.

You might also feel like:



- no one listens to you



- you can't tell others how you feel



- you can't speak up.



When there is no respect at school, it might make you want to stop going to school.



And it might make it hard for you to explain what you need.

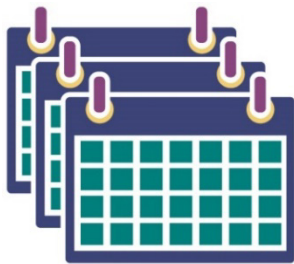


If someone doesn't show you respect at school, it might be because they:

- broke your trust
- didn't listen to your boundaries.



If this happens, it is not your fault.



It can take a long time to have trust with someone.



And sometimes, you won't have trust with everyone in your life.

It's okay to feel upset about this.

How you feel is important.

## Tips for students



You should respect other people.

And they should respect you.



If you think something is wrong, talk to someone you trust.

They can support you if you need help.

Someone you trust might be a:



- parent



- friend



- teacher.

## Tips for parents and carers



Look for signs that someone isn't treating your child with respect.

For example, how they act might change.



Your child might tell you something they are worried about.



Make a plan for what you will do if this happens.

And find out who you can talk to at their school.

You can organise a meeting with:



- you
- your child
- the school.



In the meeting, you can all work together to support your child.



## Getting support to have your say



You can get help from someone outside of the school.

For example, an **advocate**.

An advocate is someone who can:



- support you



- help you have your say



- give you information and advice.



To find an advocate, you can visit the Disability Advocacy Network Australia website.

[www.dana.org.au/find-an-advocate](http://www.dana.org.au/find-an-advocate)

## What teachers and schools need to do



To make sure everyone treats each other with respect, there are things teachers and schools need to do.



Teachers and schools need to make the place where students learn **accessible**.

When something is accessible, everyone can use it.



This might be:

- a place or a building
- a service
- information
- a website.

At your school, this might be:



- an activity



- your classroom



- the school building



- the playground.



Teachers and schools need to make the place where students learn inclusive.



Teachers and schools need to work out what students need.



And they need to work with:

- students
- parents and carers.



Teachers and schools need to help the student work towards their goals.

## Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this guide mean.

### **Accessible**

When something is accessible, everyone can use it.



This might be:

- a place or a building
- a service
- information
- a website.

### **Advocate**



An advocate is someone who can:

- support you
- help you have your say
- give you information and advice.



### **Boundaries**

Boundaries are rules you make so other people know how to act towards you.



## Complaint

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.

## Gender identity

Your gender identity is not about your body being male or female.



It is about who you feel you are as a person.

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- none of these.



## Inclusive

When something is inclusive, everyone can take part.





## Sexuality

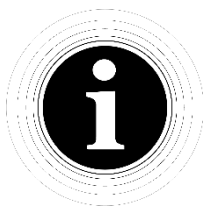
Your sexuality is who you:

- love
- are attracted to.



## Support staff

People who help teachers work with students with disability.



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