



Information sheet:

Aspects of school life that could be reviewed by schools

A whole-school approach to bullying views a school as a system made up of interconnected parts or layers. The different activities of each layer can be aligned so they support and build on each other.

1. **The ethos and environment.** This includes school policies and ethos, leadership practices, teacher modelling, and the physical environment along with student management and support systems.
2. **Curriculum, teaching and learning.** Curriculum delivery, teaching and learning, student skill development, and teacher professional development.
3. **Community connections.** Connections with parents and caregivers, education, and health agencies and community groups.

The list below shows different aspects of school life that could be included in each layer of the school system noted above. These have been identified in the literature as aspects of school life that could be reviewed by schools as they work to build a safer and more caring climate that deters bullying.

School ethos and environment

School ethos and culture

- School activities model a caring and respectful climate which celebrates pro-social behaviours.
- School activities acknowledge and affirm students' different cultures and backgrounds.
- The school is a safe place for students and staff.
- Students and staff have a sense of belonging to school.
- The leadership team models a caring and collaborative approach.
- Effective and collaborative processes are used to implement new practices.
- There are systems in place for seeking student input and working collaboratively with students.

Physical environment

- School buildings and the physical environment are safe spaces.

Student support structures and behaviour management processes

- Staff have shared expectations and approaches to promoting desired behaviours.
- Policies and strategies for monitoring and addressing behaviour incidents are well understood.
- Approaches for managing behaviours are fair, consistent, and collaborative.
- Systems are in place to enable students to offer social support to their peers and problem-solve social situations.
- Break times are effectively managed.
- Support is provided (to all students as well as those who are new to school or vulnerable).

- At-risk students are identified and supported.

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Teacher modelling

- Teachers model caring and respectful interactions and have a respect for diversity.
- Teachers have high expectations.
- The curriculum programme provides opportunities for students to engage in tasks that are likely to enhance their social and emotional competencies.
- Teachers use strategies that are likely to enhance students' social and emotional competencies.
- Student input is sought in developing social problem-solving strategies.

Student culture

- Students are supported to develop a caring and positive peer culture.
- Students are encouraged to show respect for others' cultures and backgrounds.
- Students are supported to learn strategies for managing their emotions and behaviour (including social problem-solving and help-seeking).
- Students are supported to learn social and emotional skills through curriculum and class activities such as those found on the FRIENDS website.

Teacher learning

- Professional learning experiences support teachers to manage student behaviour in ways that are effective and draw on student input.
- Professional learning experiences support teachers to offer classroom programmes that enhance students' social and emotional competencies.
- School professional learning processes are effective and are driven by identified school and classroom needs.

Community connections

- The school provides information and training to parents and whānau about school approaches.
- The school works with parents and whānau to improve social and emotional wellbeing at school.
- The school makes strategic connections with community groups, health and education professionals and external providers with the aim of improving social and emotional wellbeing at school.

Tip

Look at what you can do to make your classroom or centre a stimulating, supportive, and well-managed learning space where positive behaviour can thrive.

- Build caring relationships with children and young people. Respect what each one brings to the class or centre (from home, their culture, and peers). Allow the experiences of the child or young person to be recognised in the classroom or centre.
- Have high expectations of all children and young people (be sure they are achievable).
- He moana pupuke ka ekengia e te waka – a choppy sea can be navigated. Have belief and faith that children and young people can grow and learn new strategies and behaviour.
- Be flexible, adjust the programme, and use a range of learning strategies.

- Use a range of interactions – instruction, monitoring, coaching, recognition, feedback, feed-forward, and individual and group interactions.
- Anticipate issues, plan, and improvise.

The information in this information sheet is taken from Wellbeing@school: Building a safe and caring school climate that deters bullying. Produced by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) in 2011, the booklet summarises what is known in New Zealand and internationally about how to promote a safe and caring school environment that addresses bullying behaviour.

Remember that single, unplanned interventions on their own may not be effective. They need to be:

- in response to an identified need (enquire and gather data)
- supported by effective systems and be part of an overall plan
- delivered within the context of clearly identified whole-school expectations, reinforcements, and consequences
- reviewed regularly.

Also see the Wellbeing@School website for student and staff surveys and self-review tools.