GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Education**

CEO Instruction: Recommendation for exclusion when a student has made intentional physical contact with a staff member

Effective: 30 November 2026

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CEO Instruction: Recommendation for exclusion when a student has made intentional physical contact with a staff member

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Schools need to be safe places for employees, students and visitors. It is never acceptable for physical aggression to cause risk to the safety or wellbeing of people on school sites. It is a serious matter when school staff are the subject of intentional physical contact from a student. These incidents have the potential for psychological and physical harm to the staff involved and are disruptive to teaching and learning in the school community.

Under section 92 of the *School Education Act 1999*, principals are empowered to form an opinion as to whether or not a student should be excluded, the grounds for which are outlined in section 91 of the *School Education Act 1999*.

As principal, you have the authority to consider the circumstances of an incident and if you form an opinion that the student has committed an act that warrants exclusion being considered, you should make the case for a recommendation for exclusion.

The following Instruction of the Chief Executive Officer is issued under section 233 of the *School Education Act 1999*. This Instruction relates to actions to be taken where a student intentionally or recklessly makes physical contact with a member of school staff.

I am instructing you that for the purposes of section 91, it is a breach of conduct for a student to make intentional physical contact with school staff. In accordance with section 92, in forming an opinion on whether or not to recommend exclusion, as principal of the school you must take into consideration the following factors:

- The nature and impact of the injury, including any physical or psychological harm experienced by the staff member.
- The student's actions, intent and the circumstances leading to the physical contact.
- The student's age, maturity, developmental capacity, communication needs or any known diagnosed or imputed disability.
- The views of the school staff member who experienced the physical contact.
- If applicable, the student's behaviour history, supports, reasonable adjustments and interventions that have been implemented.
- Any other relevant issues relating to the incident and physical contact.

This Instruction will be reflected in the requirements related to the Student Behaviour policy and further advice provided to principals through the Keeping our Workplace Safe resource and professional learning.

In issuing this Instruction, I acknowledge the overwhelming proportion of students in schools do behave positively and schools are empowered through legislation, policy and a range of services and interventions to support students to maintain appropriate behaviours at school.

For procedures to prepare a case for a recommendation for exclusion, refer to the Requirements related to the Student Behaviour policy.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

JAY PECKITT
DIRECTOR GENERAL