



Understand family disputes and the impact on schooling

Family disputes can significantly affect a student's education and the daily operations of a school. Under the *School Education Act 1999 (WA)*, students have rights and parents, schools and the Department of Education have obligations for the student's education, safety and welfare.

Working with families

Collaborative decision-making

We value collaboration with parents and family members when it comes to decisions that support a student's education.

Parent responsibilities

Parents and family members should work towards agreement on issues that impact the student and their schooling. Court orders apply to the parents and family members named. School staff will assist the individuals named to comply with court orders where possible and appropriate. Schools are not responsible for interpreting, enforcing or mediating family arrangements or court orders.

Guiding principles for our decision making

School priorities are:

- the student's best educational interests
- the safety and welfare of students on school premises or during school activities
- operational stability and management of the school.

School staff will consider parent preferences and their responsibility under any court orders, the facts and the school's priorities.

Depending on the student's age, their views may also be considered by school staff when making decisions.

Documentation and permissions

- Parents and family members can request significant school documents, unless there is a court order preventing access.
- Permissions for excursions and activities will be obtained from the parent or family member that has primary day-to-day contact with the school.

Managing behaviour

- Schools should not be the venue for personal meetings, gift exchanges, or informal contact.
- If disputes arise, the school can rely on the position of one parent or a family member.

To meet their school's priorities, principals may:

- issue directions to maintain the good order of the school (for example, asking someone to leave)
- call police if there is imminent risk to students or staff
- enforce prohibition orders under the School Education Regulations 2000 (WA).

If you have any questions about this information, you can contact your child's school principal.

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