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**STUDENT WELLBEING AND   
ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Andrea on 9484 1076.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school’s policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Pender’s Grove PS is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school’s values.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

**Contents**

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

**Policy**

1. **School profile**

In 2022 the school's population, of 185 students, represents a diverse range of socio-economic, cultural and language backgrounds reflecting the wider community of the City of Darebin. Fifteen teachers provide comprehensive programs in all area of the Victorian Curriculum with an emphasis on English, Mathematics and Inquiry across the curriculum. Additional teaching or aide support facilitates the development of positive student teacher relationships and differentiation of learning programs. Specialist programs in Languages (Italian), Phys. Ed., Music and Visual Arts are provided for all students on a weekly basis. Student learning and wellbeing are enhanced by additional programs including intervention, camping, swimming, interschool sport and targeted social skills programs. The school also provides transition programs from Kindergarten to Foundation as well as from Year 6 to 7. Ten Education Support Staff members undertake a range of support services including administration, integration & intervention & library technician. The school is currently in the final year of the Strategic Plan.

The school's goals are:

•To maximise learning outcomes and learning growth in numeracy for all students F-6.

•To maximise learning outcomes and learning growth in literacy for all students F-6.

•To deepen and strengthen students’ sense of engagement, wellbeing, and connectedness to school and peers.

1. **School values, philosophy and vision**

We believe that all students should be literate, numerate and curious thinkers. We believe that effective use of student data is integral to effective teaching and learning. Teaching should be differentiated to help students reach their full potential and we believe that our school values underpin all that we do. We believe that teaching is most effective when learning is relevant, authentic and collaborative and parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's school experiences on both a formal and informal level.

Teachers and Education Support Staff at Pender’s Grove are friendly, dedicated, professional and are committed to continual improvement. Teams are effective and supportive and work towards cohesive teaching and learning outcomes. Classroom and specialist teachers, leadership and support staff all work together to create successful programs and to build an inquiring learning and teaching environment.

1. **Engagement strategies**

*Pender’s Grove PS has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.*

*A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:*

*Universal*

* *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
* *prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing*
* *creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive*
* *welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning*
* *analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data*
* *teachers at Pender’s Grove PS use the PGPS instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
* *teachers at Pender’s Grove PS adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching*
* *our school’s Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community*
* *carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
* *positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents*
* *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
* *students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
* *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through fortnightly peer support programs and whole school special event/activities*
* *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
  + *Respectful Relationships*
  + *Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Program*
  + *Bounceback*
  + *School startup program*
* *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour when required*
* *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, lunchtime activities)*
* *F-6 buddy programs*

*Targeted*

* *each teaching team (2-3 grades) have a shared responsibility for their students, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in the group, and can all act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
* *the school employs a dedicated Student Welfare Coordinator at the Leading Teacher level*
* *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
* *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
* *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*

*Individual*

* [*Student Support Groups*](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy)
* [*Individual Education Plans*](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/individual-education-plans-ieps/policy)
* [*Behaviour - Students*](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/policy)
* [*Behaviour Support Plans*](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/guidance/6-behaviour-support-plans)
* [*Student Support Services*](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-services/policy)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

* [Program for Students with Disabilities](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/psd.aspx)
* [*Mental health toolkit*](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/Pages/mentalhealthtoolkit.aspx)
* [*headspace*](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/Pages/headspace-counselling-secondary.aspx)
* [Navigator](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/behaviour/engagement/Pages/navigator.aspx)
* [LOOKOUT](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/lookout.aspx)

*Pender’s Grove PS implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:*

* *building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
* *meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school*
* *developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan*
* *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up*
* *referring the student to:* 
  + *school-based wellbeing supports*
  + *Student Support Services*
  + *Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst*
  + *Re-engagement programs*

*Where necessary the school will support the student’s family to engage by:*

* *being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student’s circumstances and health and wellbeing*
* *collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student*
* *monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family*
* *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
  + *with a disability*
  + *in Out of Home Care*
  + *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

1. **Identifying students in need of support**

*Pender’s Grove PS is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Engagement team & SWC play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Pender’s Grove PS will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:*

* *personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled*
* *attendance records*
* *academic performance*
* *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
* *attendance, detention and suspension data*
* *engagement with families*
* *self-referrals or referrals from peers*
* *observations by/consultation with external allied health staff eg. NDIS providers where appropriate*

1. **Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school’s Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

* participate fully in their education
* feel safe, secure and happy at school
* learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
* express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

* participate fully in their educational program
* display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
* respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

1. **Student behavioural expectations and management**

*Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school’s Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with observations by Pender’s Grove Primary School’s Bullying policy.*

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Example School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department’s policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.*

*Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.*

*Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student’s behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.*

*Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:*

* *warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate*
* *teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour*
* *withdrawal of privileges*
* *referral to the Year Level Coordinator*
* *restorative practices*
* *detentions*
* *behaviour support and intervention meetings*
* *suspension*
* *expulsion*

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Pender’s Grove PS is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

1. **Engaging with families**

Pender’s Grove PS values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child’s learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

* ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
* maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
* providing parent/carer volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
* involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
* involving families in school decision making
* coordinating resources and services from the community for families
* including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

1. **Evaluation**

Pender’s Grove PS will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

* student survey data
* incidents data
* school reports
* parent survey
* case management
* CASES21, including attendance and absence data
* SOCS

Pender’s Grove PS will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

**COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

* Available publicly on our school’s website
* Included in staff induction processes
* Included in transition and enrolment packs
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department’s policies at:

* [Suspension process](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/guidance/1-suspension-process)
* [Expulsions - Decision](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/guidance/decision)

**Further information and resources**

Please also see our website for:

* *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
* *Bullying Prevention*
* *Child Safe Standards*,

## **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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| Policy last reviewed | March/April 2022 |
| Consultation | School Council and staff |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | March 2024 |