

# Student Engagement Policy

## DEFINITION

Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive:

- Behavioural engagement refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.
- Emotional engagement encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a student's sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.
- Cognitive engagement relates to a student's investment in their learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

## RATIONALE

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) is committed to providing safe, secure and stimulating environments for all students. Students can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

The Student Engagement Policy articulates our school community's shared expectations in the areas of student engagement, attendance and behaviour. The policy supports the rights and articulates the expectations of every member of the school community to engage in and promote a safe and inclusive educational environment where the diverse learning and wellbeing needs of students are recognised. The Student Engagement Policy will focus upon prevention and early intervention for students who are experiencing behavioural or attendance related issues as this is the most effective means of enhancing the resilience of young people.

## PURPOSE

This document will provide a framework for educational achievement, prevention of absences and appropriate behaviour. The focus is on prevention and early intervention for students who are experiencing behavioural or attendance related issues as this is the most effective means of enhancing the resilience of young people.

## GUIDELINES

At Pender's Grove Primary School we aim to:

- foster a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment through engagement
- provide students with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure
- provide support for individual circumstances if a student begins to disengage from their learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated
- maximise student learning opportunities and performance through engagement
- provide genuine opportunities for student/parent participation and student/parent voice
- build a school environment based on positive behaviours and values
- provide prevention (cognitive, behavioural and emotional) and intervention for all students at risk

## PROFILE

Pender's Grove Primary School was established in 1924 and is located in the northern suburbs on the border of Thornbury and Preston. The school population represents a diverse range of socio-economic, cultural and language backgrounds. This diversity provides a unique learning environment for students and staff and reflects the wider community of the City of Darebin. The Pender's Grove Primary School community believes that learning is innate and lifelong. We foster a safe, positive, supportive and equitable learning environment that respects the richness of our diverse community.

Our dynamic approach to learning enables students to participate in and adapt to a rapidly changing world.'

Teachers' work collaboratively in Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to provide learning programs in accordance with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PoLT). The Early Years (Prep - 2) program is supported by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, and there is a strong emphasis on the five learning outcomes identified for all children. Instructional models, including the e<sup>5</sup>, are used to support program planning, to inform conversations and to guide the observation, critique and reflection of classroom practice. Teaching teams have at least one hour of common Assessment and Planning Time (APT) each week and PLTs meet together once a week after school. The PLT leaders, data manager and the Principal form the School Leadership Team.

Small class sizes facilitate the development of positive student teacher relationships and differentiation of learning programs. We promote engagement through specialist programs in LOTE (Italian), Music, Visual Arts. Reading Recovery is provided for students in Year 1, as well as intervention through additional support teachers and enrichment classes for identified students. Our education support staff members undertake a range of support services including administration, integration teacher aides, library technician, first aid and the Out of School Hours program coordination.

The increase in student access to technology (notebooks, net books, digital cameras etc) and flexibility to use computers within the classroom, or the computer lab, has enabled teachers to further embed the use of information and communication technology (ICT) into learning programs and has supported the implementation of the Ultranet. The installation of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms at the beginning of 2011 has further enhanced student engagement in learning.

The values that underpin Pender's Grove Primary School and the community help students engage with learning and live and work in a productive and harmonious way. These values are based on the core values from the BOUNCE BACK! Program which is implemented across the school.

There is a strong commitment to the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's vision to provide 'Every Child, Every Opportunity' and to the goal of the Northern Metropolitan Region's School improvement Strategy that 'all our students will be literate, numerate and curious'. The Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians is paramount to our planning and decision making.

## **PREVENTION STATEMENT**

At Pender's Grove Primary School we believe that every student, parent/carer and staff member should be able to work and learn in a safe and stimulating environment. We believe that every student's opinion is valuable and each student has ownership of the school values and code of conduct. We support these beliefs and principles by being pro-active with all issues, rewarding good behaviour, providing extra-curricular activities, providing students with opportunities for leadership roles, being consistent, following the 'School Code of Conduct' consequences and supporting each other, as a staff, on behaviour issues.

The school implements preventative and early intervention approaches to support student engagement and learning. The school has a consistent and whole school approach to:

- promoting and expecting high expectations for student learning
- implementing current pedagogical (teaching strategies and methods of instruction) knowledge and thinking to engage students in meaningful learning experiences
- early identification of vulnerable students and those at risk of disengagement from school
- coordinating early intervention and prevention strategies utilising relevant expertise and support services
- development of Individual Student Learning Plans
- recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students through the Program for Students with Disabilities program
- prioritising professional learning to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented
- providing a safe environment

- communicating clear expectations of individual responsibility for behaviour and attendance
- providing opportunities for peer support and Better Buddies
- providing leadership opportunities for students, and actively involving students in decision making
- providing extracurricular activities
- providing effective student transition programs

We seek to engage with the broader community whose expertise and experience is encouraged to further build the capacity of the school and to respond to the needs of its students. These partnerships can also provide optimum service delivery for vulnerable students.

We support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners by:

- encouraging and expecting all parents to be aware of the school's Student Engagement Policy
- conducting school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing opportunities for parents/carers and students to share in learning
- involving families with Home Learning and other curriculum related activities
- providing opportunities for families to engage in school decision-making processes and opportunities
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- providing opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills
- providing opportunities for teaching staff to further develop understandings and knowledge through professional development
- being transparent in the implementation of the Student Engagement Policy.

At Pender's Grove Primary School emphasis is placed on developing the school values

Value	Action	Definition
Integrity	Being honest, fair, responsible and loyal	Integrity means: Acts in accordance with principles and moral and ethical conduct and ensures consistency between words and deeds
Caring	Caring for other people and showing compassion	
Cooperation	Working with others as a team	Cooperation means: Encouraging and helping others, negotiating, sharing and compromising and making decisions as a team.
Acceptance	Understanding and accepting the differences between oneself and others, and including others socially	Be aware of others and their culture, accept diversity within a democratic society being included and including others
Respect	Treat others with consideration and regard Respecting the rights and opinions of others	Respect means: Being a proactive listener, being considerate and by preserving dignity Looking after personal and school property
Friendliness	Being friendly and socially responsible, and including others	

In order for students to reach their full potential, we firmly believe, attendance is vital for continued academic, social and emotional development. We encourage this through ensuring school and DEECD guidelines are adhered to. This is maintained by following school policy, continuing and strengthening positive relationships with all community members, providing rich and stimulating

learning environments for all students, maintaining accurate, up to date attendance records and ensuring parent awareness and accountability

## RIGHTS

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)* outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees to act compatibly with human rights and to consider them when making decisions and delivering services. The following legislation needs to be considered when determining rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community:

- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 –Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (in conjunction with DEECD Disability Standards for Education 2005)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Education Act 1958

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights. Pender’s Grove Primary School believes schools should be safe places for everyone – students, parent(s)/carer(s), staff and members of the local community. It is the involvement and commitment of the whole school community that will achieve a safe and respectful culture.

## WHOLE SCHOOL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights	Responsibilities
To be free of harassment	To ensure others are not harassed
To receive support in difficult situations	To provide support to each other
To be valued and treated with respect	Build positive relationships with the school community

## STUDENT

Rights	Responsibility
Feel safe and be safe in the school environment.	To allow others to learn
Have opinions, beliefs and values respected.	To be polite. courteous and well mannered
Work and play without interference, intimidation or disruption.	To allow others to work and play without interference

## PARENTS/CARERS

Rights	Responsibilities
To expect their child will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged	Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials and attitudes
To be contacted when their child continually disregards the School Engagement Policy or is involved in a major incident	Promote respectful relationships

## STAFF

Rights	Responsibilities
To be treated with respect by students. Parent(s)/Carer(s) and peers	To treat students in a way that develops self esteem To communicate positively with parents and peers

To expect students to follow the Engagement Guideline	To follow the procedures in the Engagement Guidelines To use logical consequences and restorative practices To keep records of significant disciplinary actions
To expect students to learn	To assist students to learn To provide an inclusive and differentiated curriculum To communicate student progress to parent(s)/carer(s)

### SHARED EXPECTATION

Pender's Grove Primary School will provide an environment where the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. We support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and expectations. We believe actively teaching students, whole school engagement, attendance and behavioural expectations creates a predictable environment that allows students to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from each other.

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Justice is a philosophy and a set of practices that embraces a blend between a high degree of discipline that encompasses clear expectations, limits and consequences and a high degree of support and nurturance.

### EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of Pender's Grove three year review cycle.

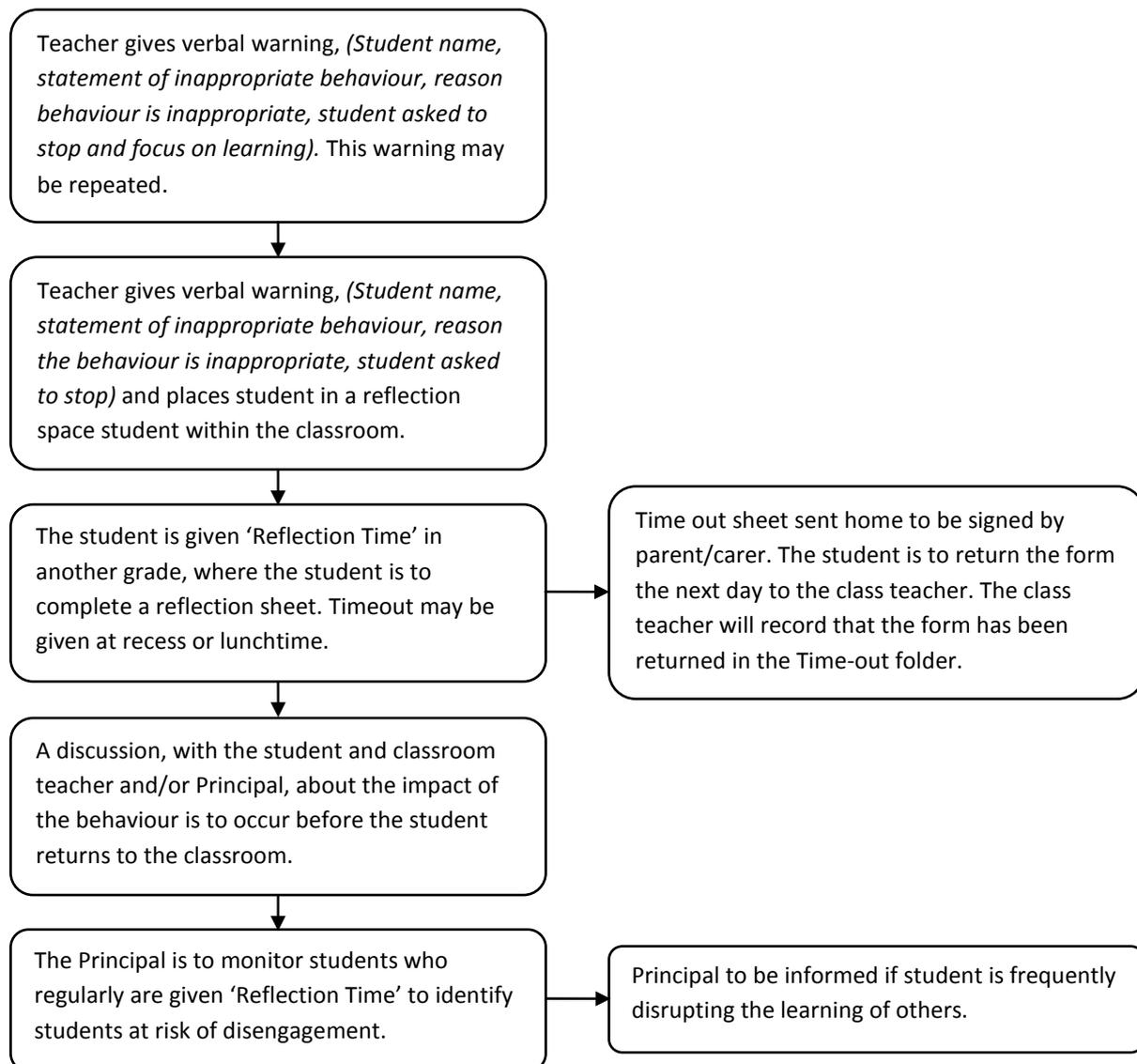
Ratified by School Council 14 May 2012

# PENDER'S GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL STAGED RESPONSE TO STUDENT BEHAVIOUR CLASSROOM

## Prevention and Early Intervention

- Define and teach school-wide expectations and school values for all.
- Establish, via classroom negotiation, classroom protocol and consequences and display in the room
- Develop a praise/reward system for positive behaviour
- Identify school-wide processes to identify students at risk of disengagement from learning.

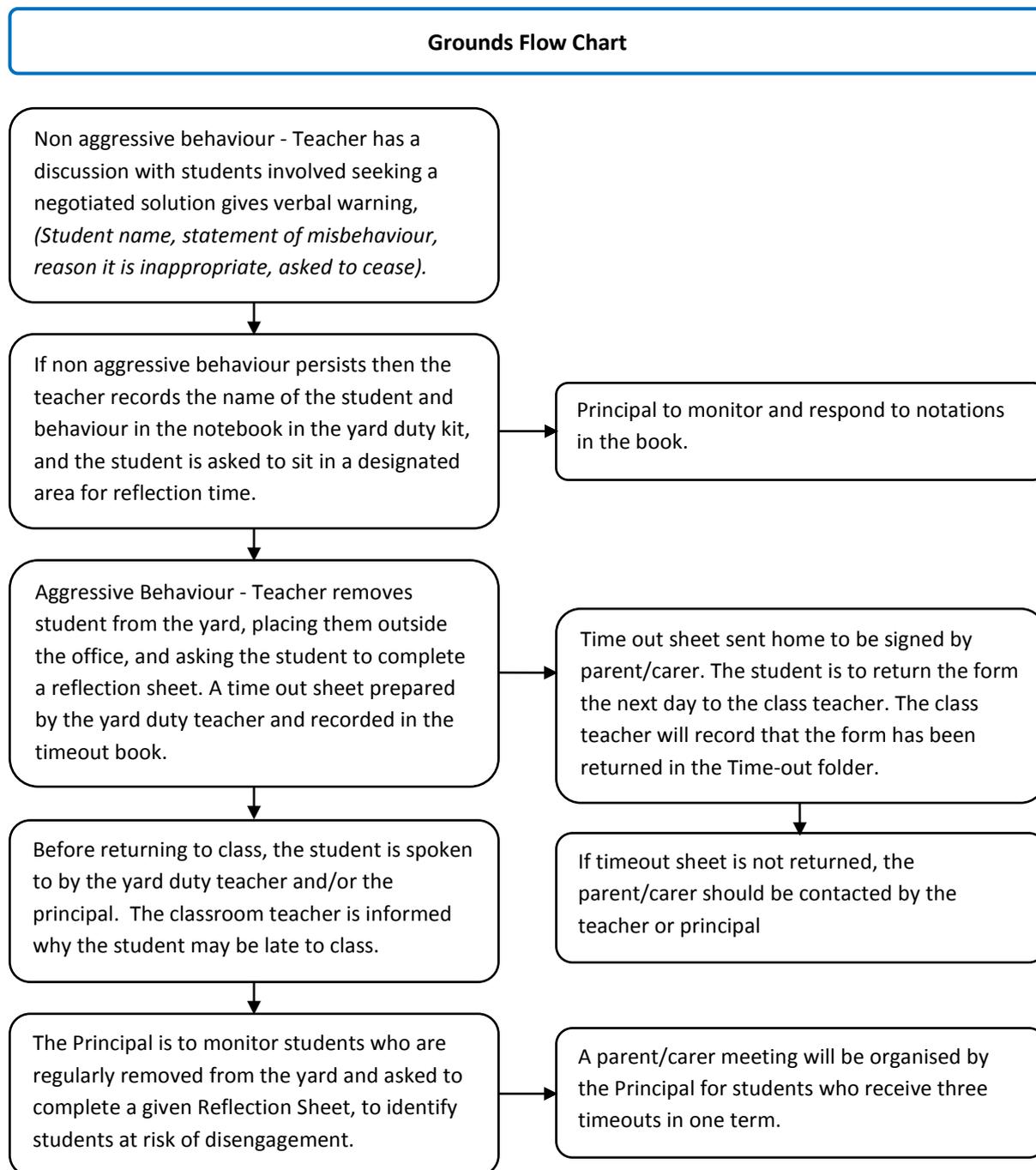
### Disrupted Learning Flow Chart



# PENDER'S GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL STAGED RESPONSE TO STUDENT BEHAVIOUR - GROUNDS

## Prevention and Early Intervention

- Define and teach school-wide expectations and school values for all.



## PENDER'S GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL STAGED RESPONSE TO SUSPENSION

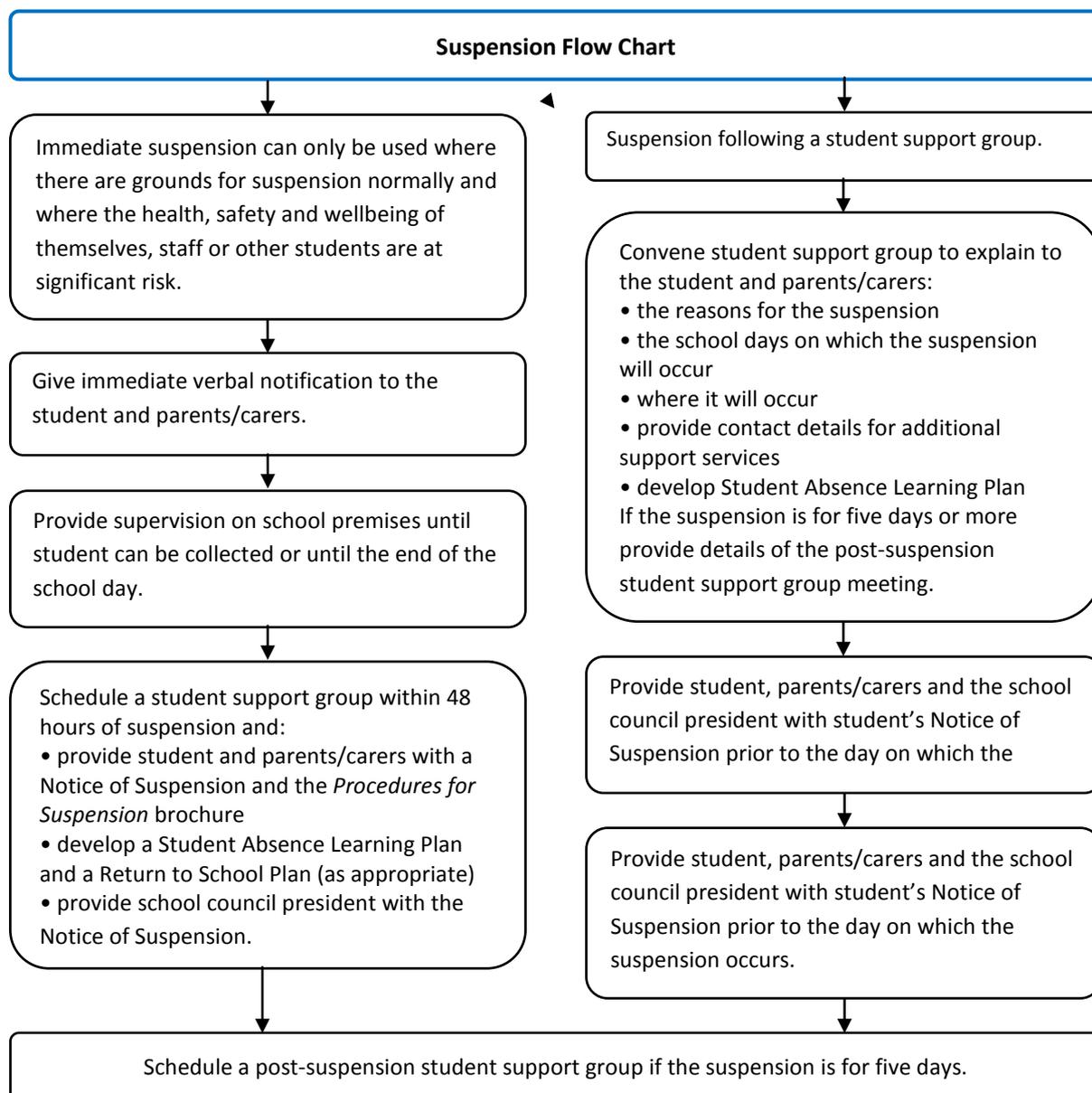
### Reasons for Suspension

Under Ministerial Order 184, acceptable reasons for suspension are:

- threatening or endangering the health, safety or wellbeing of others
- committing an act of significant violence against a person or property or being knowingly involved in the theft of property
- possessing, using or assisting another person to use prohibited drugs or substances
- failing to comply with a reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member
- consistently behaving in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student
- consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person

### When suspension is being considered

- student support group convened to inform the student and their parents/carers that a suspension is being considered.
- student support group should develop a range of strategies to support the student and parents/carers to address the area of concern and avoid suspension where possible.



## PENDER'S GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL STAGED RESPONSE TO EXPULSION

### Reason for Expulsion

Under Ministerial Order 184, acceptable reasons for expulsion are:

- threatening or endangering the health, safety or wellbeing of others
- committing an act of significant violence against a person or property or being knowingly involved in the theft of property
- possessing, using or assisting another person to use prohibited drugs or substances
- failing to comply with a reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member
- consistently behaving in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student
- consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person

### Prior to Expulsion

- Where the principal considers that due to the severity of the situation and the possibility of immediate threat to another person, that an immediate action is required, the principal may implement an immediate suspension prior to a student support group being convened. (See Suspension Process Flow Chart)
- Student support group comprises all relevant school and professional staff, the student (if appropriate) and the parents/carers. Principal ensures a range of strategies consistent with a staged response have been implemented. If despite these strategies the student's inappropriate behaviour persists.

