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 e5, 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

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

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:

- 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be free of harassment</td>
<td>To ensure others are not harassed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To receive support in difficult situations</td>
<td>To provide support to each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be valued and treated with respect</td>
<td>Build positive relationships with the school community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STUDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feel safe and be safe in the school environment.</td>
<td>To allow others to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have opinions, beliefs and values respected.</td>
<td>To be polite, courteous and well mannered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work and play without interference, intimidation or disruption.</td>
<td>To allow others to work and play without interference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PARENTS/CARERS

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

### STAFF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be treated with respect by students. Parent(s)/Carer(s) and peers</td>
<td>To treat students in a way that develops self esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To communicate positively with parents and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To expect students to follow the Engagement Guideline</td>
<td>To follow the procedures in the Engagement Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To use logical consequences and restorative practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To keep records of significant disciplinary actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To expect students to learn</td>
<td>To assist students to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To provide an inclusive and differentiated curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To communicate student progress to parent(s)/carer(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

Teacher gives verbal warning, *(Student name, statement of inappropriate behaviour, reason behaviour is inappropriate, student asked to stop and focus on learning)*. This warning may be repeated.

Teacher gives verbal warning, *(Student name, statement of inappropriate behaviour, reason the behaviour is inappropriate, student asked to stop)* and places student in a reflection space student within the classroom.

The student is given ‘Reflection Time’ in another grade, where the student is to complete a reflection sheet. Timeout may be given at recess or lunchtime.

A discussion, with the student and classroom teacher and/or Principal, about the impact of the behaviour is to occur before the student returns to the classroom.

The Principal is to monitor students who regularly are given ‘Reflection Time’ to identify students at risk of disengagement.

Time out sheet sent home to be signed by parent/carer. The student is to return the form the next day to the class teacher. The class teacher will record that the form has been returned in the Time-out folder.

Principal to be informed if student is frequently disrupting the learning of others.
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.

**Non aggressive behaviour**
Teacher has a discussion with students involved seeking a negotiated solution gives verbal warning, *(Student name, statement of misbehaviour, reason it is inappropriate, asked to cease).*

If non aggressive behaviour persists then the teacher records the name of the student and behaviour in the notebook in the yard duty kit, and the student is asked to sit in a designated area for reflection time.

**Aggressive Behaviour**
Teacher removes student from the yard, placing them outside the office, and asking the student to complete a reflection sheet. A time out sheet prepared by the yard duty teacher and recorded in the timeout book.

Before returning to class, the student is spoken to by the yard duty teacher and/or the principal. The classroom teacher is informed why the student may be late to class.

The Principal is to monitor students who are regularly removed from the yard and asked to complete a given Reflection Sheet, to identify students at risk of disengagement.

Principal to monitor and respond to notations in the book.

Time out sheet sent home to be signed by parent/carer. The student is to return the form the next day to the class teacher. The class teacher will record that the form has been returned in the Time-out folder.

If timeout sheet is not returned, the parent/carer should be contacted by the teacher or principal.

A parent/carer meeting will be organised by the Principal for students who receive three timeouts in one term.

Grounds Flow Chart
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 of range of strategies to support the student and parents/carers to address the area of concern and avoid suspension where possible.

Suspension Flow Chart

Immediate suspension can only be used where there are grounds for suspension normally and where the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students are at significant risk.

Give immediate verbal notification to the student and parents/carers.

Provide supervision on school premises until student can be collected or until the end of the school day.

Schedule a student support group within 48 hours of suspension and:
- provide student and parents/carers with a Notice of Suspension and the Procedures for Suspension brochure
- develop a Student Absence Learning Plan and a Return to School Plan (as appropriate)
- provide school council president with the Notice of Suspension.

Suspension following a student support group.

Convene student support group to explain to the student and parents/carers:
- the reasons for the suspension
- the school days on which the suspension will occur
- where it will occur
- provide contact details for additional support services
- develop Student Absence Learning Plan
If the suspension is for five days or more:
- provide details of the post-suspension student support group meeting.

Provide student, parents/carers and the school council president with student’s Notice of Suspension prior to the day on which the suspension occurs.

Schedule a post-suspension student support group if the suspension is for five days.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expulsion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal is responsible for the student’s expulsion. Principal notifies the regional director that a student support group is being convened to discuss expulsion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Convene student support group to provide the student and their parents/carers with: |
| Notice of Expulsion |
| Expulsion Appeal Proforma |
| Information brochure *Procedures for Expulsion* |
| Opportunity to be heard |
| Identification of future educational opportunities. |

| Regional director’s nominee attends Student Support Group meeting to ensure all options are considered and to assist in implementing agreed course of action. |

| Student support group comprises all relevant school and professional staff, the student (if appropriate) and the parents/carers. |

| Principal provides school council president with the Notice of Expulsion and all relevant attachments. |

| Principal provides Regional Director with the Notice of Expulsion and the Expulsion Report. |

| Regional Director (or nominee) works with the principal to ensure the student is supported and the outcomes of the Expulsion Report are achieved. |

| Principal schedules a meeting with destination school or the registered training organisation with the support of the regional director (or nominee). Principal provides destination school or training. |