'Balit Yirramboi'
Dohertys Creek P-9 College
TRUGANINA

Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact 8560 6079.

PURPOSE

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

(a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
(b) expectations for positive student behaviour
(c) support available to students and families
(d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Dohertys Creek P-9 College 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 and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

Dohertys Creek P-9 College is a relatively new school opened which in 2019 with approximately 270 children. It is expected that the school will continue to grow rapidly as it is situated in the Wyndham

Council, the fastest growing area in Australia. It is expected that the school population will be culturally and socially diverse.

Our enrolments for 2024 are:

Foundation: 198 students
Year 1: 220
Year 2: 226
Year 3: 227
Year 4: 178
Year 5: 162
Year 6: 139
Year 7: 139
Year 8: 127
Year 9: 86

The school operates with the following structure:

- 4 Principal Class officers
- 6 Leading Teachers
- 10 Learning Specialists
- 95.4 EFT Classroom teachers
- 18.55 EFT Education Support Staff
- 22.58 EFT Integration Aides.

The school endeavours to engage a diverse cross section of our community in meeting the wellbeing needs of our children and their families. Furthermore the school maintains a strong commitment to developing links with the community and forging partnerships with local organisations to build engagement and inclusion for example:

- The Smith Family,
- Royal Children's Hospital
- Before & After School Care program and Vacation Care program
- Local Sporting Clubs
- Local kindergartens whereby a supportive transition program is organised for pre-schoolers.

Along with all of the above, the school will offer extracurricular and wellbeing programs as part of the school's syllabus. Programs will run over lunch or after school such as dance group, chess club, friendship club, mentoring, sport and others to assist in connecting children and families to school.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Vision

Our vision is to inspire and empower thinkers. We will create authentic relationships to enable successful living and wellbeing. We will become a recognised centre of educational excellence and inclusion.

Mission

It takes a village to raise a child

Dohertys Creek P-9 College promotes and values academic excellence. We will provide a balanced and high quality personalised curriculum with a strong focus on student wellbeing. We will deliver a stimulating, nurturing environment and challenge all students to attain their highest potential academically, socially, creatively and physically.

At Dohertys Creek we believe:

- strong relationships matter. Every child must feel they have an advocate in their school and children learn best from teachers they love and respect.
- teachers can make a difference and need to be supported to love what they do.
- teaching should focus on academic content and social development. How children learn is as important as what they learn.
- children are better prepared for learning when they are in a safe, supportive and engaging environment.
- a culture of inclusiveness strengthens children's sense of connection. A sense of wellbeing and dignity emerges for children when they feel they have something to contribute.
- consistent and supportive behaviour management procedures can contribute to long term social goals.

We will ensure equity for all our children and will do what is needed to assist learning and wellbeing.

We are a school culture and community of people who are inspiring, accepting and non-judgemental.

We will value everyone's voice in our community.

Our values are: Respect, Kindness, Learning, Teamwork and Integrity.

We are committed to the values of:

Respect. Respect is:-

- Caring about people and treating them well
- Valuing ourselves and others
- Speaking and acting with courtesy
- Taking care of people's belongings
- Following the school rules

Kindness. Kindness is:-

- Showing that you care
- Making life better for others by doing good
- Giving help to someone who is sad
- Accepting others who are different
- Thinking about people's needs

Learning. Learning is:-

- Gaining knowledge and skills
- Showing inspiration and creativity
- Doing the best job you can possibly do
- Having goals and a clear focus
- Listening, Purpose and Practice!

Teamwork. Teamwork is:-

- Working together
- Keep a safe and happy environment
- Cooperation and helping others
- Being a team player and sharing the load
- Respecting others

Integrity. Integrity is:-

- Standing up for what you believe in
- Doing the right thing even when it's hard
- Living by the schools values
- Being honest and sincere

Relationships are everything

We believe learning cannot be separated from wellbeing and engagement.

Dohertys Creek P-9 College is deliberate in elevating the importance of student wellbeing alongside student learning. The best wellbeing we can give our children is success in a rich diverse learning environment.

The safety and wellbeing of our school population is our highest priority and our first consideration. We have **zero tolerance of child abuse**, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently.

A commitment to the Child Safe Standards underpins our vision, mission, policies and procedures. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff, volunteers and the parent community.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children if applicable, to the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Any staff member who believes that a child is at immediate risk of abuse must phone 000.

Our school is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our recruitment practices are robust as we seek to employ skilled people to work with children.

We respect the privacy of all individuals, whether they are staff, volunteers, parents/carers or children. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Dohertys Creek P-9 College have developed specific school values with the community. These values are followed and modelled by all of our community.

We strongly endorse the following:

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

3. Wellbeing Engagement strategies

Dohertys Creek P-9 College aims to provide a stimulating, supportive and inclusive environment. The school acknowledges and celebrates individuality by having a positive view of the uniqueness of the learner while focussing on individual growth and the fostering of talents, skills and interests. We are committed to developing highly literate and numerate children, who can think critically, take risks, seize opportunities enthusiastically, are resilient and work collaboratively with others, while at the same time show respect, care and kindness for others.

The school has in place the following programs and policies which address child wellbeing and engagement at Dohertys Creek P-9 College:

CURRICULUM PROGRAMS

- Literacy intervention
- Second Language program
- Swimming
- PATHS program
- Excursions
- Camps – various at each year level

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

- Sports clinics
- Lunch time clubs
- Before/After School Care
- Vacation Care (in due course)
- Classroom helpers' programs

POLICIES/PROTOCOLS

- Child Safe Environment
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Bullying & Harassment
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Diversity & Inclusion

- Mentoring
- "Buddies" for new Preps
- Speech therapy
- Special Weeks (Education Week, Book Week, Science Week)
- Mobile Phones, Use by Children
- Raising Concerns and Complaints
- Uniform/Dress Code
- SunSmart
- Volunteers & Visitors to the School
- Camps and Excursions

All school programs support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to the following, as outlined in s 1.2.1 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic):*

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance

We have built strong links with the community and aim to develop strong home school partnerships - involving families in as many ways as we can, including the classroom helpers' program, School Council, Grandparents' Days, assistance with incursions and excursions, family barbeque nights, whole school sports events, whole school assemblies, performing arts and other family events.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

Discipline and Behaviour Management

The positive and responsible behaviour of children is essential to the smooth running of the school, to the achievement of optimal learning opportunities, and to the development of a supportive and cooperative school environment.

Every child deserves a safe and positive learning experience where they are engaged and supported to reach their full potential.

Policies and procedures relating to the discipline of children are based on principles of procedural fairness.

Dohertys Creek P-9 College is proactive in providing a positive learning environment. The school uses restorative practices as a positive approach to student behaviour. We are focussed on relationships and use our values such as kindness to focus on a positive model of 'how we are' at Dohertys Creek P-9 College. PATHs is used as an explicitly taught weekly social skills program from Foundation to Yr. 6.

The school has adopted a range of evidence-based strategies to positively engage children in learning and intervene early when problems arise. These include the:

- universal (school-wide) engagement strategies that create a safe, inclusive and empowering environment
    - targeted (population-specific) engagement strategies that meet the varied needs of vulnerable cohorts, including both prevention and intervention strategies
    - individual (student-specific) engagement strategies for children at risk, including strategies to identify and respond to individual student circumstances when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated.

Definitions

Corporal punishment is a form of physical *punishment* that involves the deliberate infliction of pain as retribution for an offence, or for the purpose of disciplining or reforming a wrongdoer, or to deter attitudes or behaviour deemed unacceptable.

Physical ***restraint*** means the use of physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of a child's body or part of their body.

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a child alone in a room or area from which the child is physically prevented from leaving. This includes situations where a door is locked as well as where the door is blocked by other objects or held closed by staff. It does not include timeout, which is a behaviour management technique that is part of a Behaviour Support Plan, involves the monitored separation of the child in a non-locked setting, and is implemented for the purpose of calming.

BULLYING

Bullying is recognised globally as a complex and serious problem. It is a form of aggression, involving the abuse of power in relationships. It has many faces, including the use of emerging technologies, and varies by age, gender and culture. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are **not** defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders

Four kinds of bullying
Bullying can take a number of different forms. The Department of Education and Training's Building Respectful and Safe Schools (2010) identifies four types of bullying:

Physical bullying
Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

Verbal bullying
Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Covert bullying
Covert bullying is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Covert bullying includes;

- Lying and spreading rumours
- Negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- Mimicking unkindly
- Encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- Damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying
Cyberbullying is overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Examples include harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. Cyberbullying can happen at any time. It can be in public or in private, and sometimes is only known to the target and the person bullying.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome and which is reasonably likely to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress a person. For example, teasing a student because of their speech impediment.

WHAT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE BULLYING
There are some behaviors which although unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

Mutual Conflict
In mutual conflict, an argument or disagreement exists between children but there is no imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

Social Rejection or Dislike
Unless the social dislike is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single-episodic acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation
Single sporadic acts of nastiness or physical aggression although unacceptable is not bullying. If a child is verbally abused or hurt by another child on only one occasion they are not being bullied. Single acts

of nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different children is not the same as bullying.

Dealing with Bullying at Dohertys Creek P-9 College

At Dohertys Creek P-9 College we are committed to the safety and welfare of all children. We are constantly striving to make school a place where children can have fun and feel safe and connected. We do not condone or accept bullying.

Our PATHS program, an explicitly taught weekly program is used to provide learning about how we interact with each other. Restorative practices are also used. We work hard to prevent and deal with bullying at Dohertys Creek P-9 College. Children are encouraged to report any bullying incidents to an adult and not to remain silent about it. Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken to, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented. (Refer to Anti-Bullying & Child Welfare Policy and Child Code of Conduct)

- Staff will be provided with professional development training relating to bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment
- have ongoing professional learning about PATHs and support in implementing
- implement school curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- clarify to their class at the start of each year the school policy on bullying
- follow school protocols and procedures when investigating bullying
- intervene and swiftly manage any bullying situation that is encountered or reported by a child or family
- contact families to discuss bullying incidents or other incidents of inappropriate behaviour
- inform families of any investigations undertaken and any follow up action
- ensure all reported incidents of bullying are followed up
- offer comfort and support to victims
- seek parental support and cooperation
- record incidents
- run cyber-bullying information sessions for parents each year
- include cyber safety as part of the delivered curriculum.

Parents will:

Watch for signs of bullying and alert the school if they believe their child is being bullied, rather than 'deal' with this themselves. The following signs could suggest a child is being bullied:

- have trouble getting out of bed
- not want to go to school
- change their method or route to school or become frightened of walking to school
- change their sleeping or eating patterns
- have frequent tears, anger, mood swings and anxiety
- have unexplained bruises, cuts and scratches
- have stomach aches or unexplained pain
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- ask for extra pocket money or food
- arrive home hungry
- show an unwillingness to discuss, or secrecy about, their online communication.

STRATEGIES: THAT PARENTS CAN USE IF THEIR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

Report any bullying matters immediately to the school. Discuss the situation with your child's classroom teacher or with a member of the school's leadership team.

Do not try and resolve the matter yourself by approaching any children or families. This tends to incite/inflame the matter even further.

Parents should try to obtain as many facts as they can through discussion with their child so that they can identify if there is a REPEATED pattern. Try to identify and write down:

- what happened
- who was involved on each occasion

- where and when these things happened
- whether there was any provocation on the part of the victim
- who witnessed each situation
- did anybody else see it, and, if so, who;
- when the bullying first began;
- what solutions you have tried so far; and
- the names of any teachers who are aware of the problem as soon as you have a reasonably clear picture of the situation and the facts let your child know that you are approaching the school.
- make an appointment with your child's teacher, assistant principal, principal or a member of the leadership team to discuss the matter (please ring the office to make an appointment so we may give the matter our full attention)

At the meeting:

- bring notes of the points you want to make at the meeting.
- present your concern and information in a calm way and try to work with the school to resolve the problem. Becoming angry, making accusations or demanding certain actions may make the situation worse.
- it can be helpful to remember that if you were originally unaware of the problem, then your child's teacher may also not have known of the situation.
- be patient. The school will need time to investigate the matter and speak to all the children and staff (if applicable) involved.
- ask to see the school's Anti-Bullying policy to see the school's approach to dealing with bullying.
- the school will contact you to discuss the outcome of the investigation and to outline the steps it will take to resolve the matter.
- arrange a further meeting to discuss the plan for dealing with the matter and any future bullying incidents.

STAGED RESPONSE

In general, student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship-based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- establishing clear processes for children's management and attendance at school
- providing pro-active programs to promote engagement, positive behaviours and regular attendance.
- establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- ensuring children's participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual children
- consistently acknowledging all children
- empowering children by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- understanding the child's background and needs
- ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by children, parents/carers and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- scaffolding the child's learning program
- communicating with the parents/carers
- specific monitoring of the child's behaviour and attendance
- providing pro-active programs

Broader support strategies will include:

- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- involving the Principal, Welfare Officer, school psychologist, or other support person
- tutoring/peer tutoring
- mentoring and/or counselling
- convening Support Group meetings – the support group is an important component of the staged response for children facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- providing broader educational programs, for example extra-curricular activities , lunch time programs
- involving community support agencies

CONSEQUENCES

The school will determine the standards of behaviour required and the consequences which may include:

- graded in-school disciplinary measures
- withdrawal of privileges
- withdrawal from class
- detention
- exclusion from school
- suspension
- expulsion

When determining consequences, **corporal punishment is expressly forbidden**. Physical restraint must only be used when it is immediately required to protect the safety of the child or any other person.

In some limited circumstances, it may also be necessary to restrain a child from violent or dangerous behaviours by secluding them in an area where such action is immediately required to protect the safety of the child or any other person.

Restraint and seclusion **must not** be included in a Behaviour Support Plan or be used as a routine behaviour management technique, to punish or discipline a child or to respond to:

- a child's refusal to comply with a direction, unless that refusal to comply creates an imminent risk to the safety of the child or another person
- a child leaving the classroom/school without permission, unless that conduct causes an imminent risk to the safety of the child or another person
- verbal threats of harm from a child, except where there is a reasonable belief that the threat will be immediately enacted
- property destruction caused by the child unless that destruction is placing any person at immediate risk of harm.

The use of mechanical restraints, restraints that cover a child's mouth or exclusion rooms **are expressly prohibited**.

The school may consider detention as a consequence but must ensure DET's guidelines are strictly observed.

The school may use suspension, but only when all other measures have failed and only for the shortest possible time.

Expulsion is a measure of last resort and DET guidelines must be followed to ensure ongoing schooling is provided. The right of appeal by parents/carers is acknowledged.

Ministerial Order 1125 (Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion) took effect on 16 July 2018. The Order defines the grounds and process for suspensions, expulsions and appeals relating to expulsions of children in government schools. Only the Principal has authority to make the final decision to expel a child. This authority cannot be delegated.

Children who continue to demonstrate undesirable behaviours will be managed through a staged response which will involve an individualised management plan with support from appropriate external agencies if required. This will be managed through the establishment of a Support Group including membership of the child, parent/carer, relevant teachers, other agencies and member of the Leadership Team. This will be in accordance with DET policy. The role of the Support Group will be to better understand and provide for the child's needs including an Individual Learning Plan which may state behavioural goals.

Dohertys Creek P-9 College values its children and seeks to acknowledge those children who consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviours. Staff are expected to acknowledge those members of the school population acting appropriately.

As a school we must be careful to consistently apply consequences to students' actions. If a student does not follow the school's expectations and no response follows, the student is encouraged to assume that the school does not mind. Worse, there is a possibility that the student thinks we do not believe they are capable of the expected behaviours.
At all times, the school should scaffold ways towards better behaviour for students as far as they are capable. It is unacceptable to accept misbehaviour from any student who is capable of modifying their actions. As a school community we look for ways to equip students with better skills, habits and qualities. Compassion, high expectations and wisdom must be carefully blended to decide where this point lies for students, but we must still always aim high.

Punitive exclusions are a last resort (e.g. time out, detention, suspension, expulsion). As a school we aspire to their extinction, by making their use unnecessary rather than refusing to use them. It is important to examine the patterns of exclusion carefully, and to consider the context of exclusions in order to understand how appropriate they are.

All students have a right to learn. This means that if a student is making it difficult for a teacher to teach or students to learn, and in-class strategies have been attempted, students will be removed from the lesson temporarily until the situation can be resolved.

A restorative meeting or conversation to set the terms of reintegration should follow fixed period exclusions and possibly temporary removals. The restorative chat must lead to meaningful discussions about how to avoid recidivism, and to unpack problems that may provide context to the behaviour.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment which is supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Our school community has a right to a safe and caring environment which promotes and fosters learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem. The school is committed to providing an environment that treats all individuals with respect, courtesy and care. All members of the school community are expected to follow our values ethos which forms part of the school's culture.

Children are encouraged to access all opportunities offered within the school. Parents and children can be involved in the decision-making processes of the school, through school council and its various sub-committees, through student leadership and through parent and child surveys.

Rights of Children	Responsibilities of Children
❋ To feel safe and secure ❋ To be treated with respect and to be valued as an individual ❋ To be involved in learning ❋ To have access to quality teaching and learning programs ❋ To know their property is safe ❋ To work in a clean and tidy school	❋ Make others feel safe and secure ❋ Value others as individuals ❋ Respect and care for the property of others ❋ Keep our school clean and tidy ❋ Attend school regularly and be punctual ❋ Attempt all school tasks and participate positively ❋ Allow others to learn and work, so they can achieve their personal best ❋ Use manners; saying 'thank you', 'please', wait their turn and share ❋ Be safe at all times and treat people with kindness and respect ❋ Ask for assistance when required

	✸ Work hard to achieve goals ✸ Display our school values

Rights of Teachers	Responsibilities of Teachers
✸ To be valued and respected ✸ To work in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment ✸ To be shown courtesy and cooperation ✸ To know their property is safe ✸ To work in a clean and tidy school ✸ To be supported to love what they do ✸ To be provided opportunities for professional learning	✸ Fairly and consistently, implement the engagement and inclusion guidelines ✸ Assess and plan for effective learning ✸ Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments ✸ Respect and care for school property ✸ Know the curriculum to be taught and create an engaging and dynamic environment with focused teaching ✸ Set high expectations for children ✸ Communicate positively with children, colleagues and families, respecting their diverse backgrounds ✸ Develop a positive, professional and caring relationship with every child in the class and their families ✸ Ensure that every child is provided with the support and resources to further their learning ✸ Abide by any mandatory reporting procedures ✸ Contribute to maintaining an inclusive school culture ✸ Display our school values ✸ Engage enthusiastically and collaboratively in professional learning opportunities

Rights of Education Support Staff	Responsibilities of Education Support Staff
✸ To be valued and respected ✸ To work in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment ✸ To be shown courtesy and cooperation ✸ To know their property is safe ✸ To work in a clean and tidy school ✸ To be supported to love what they do ✸ To be provided opportunities for professional learning	✸ Provide support during the school day as the need arises to staff, children and families ✸ Investigate avenues of assistance or support outside the school when required/appropriate ✸ Work closely with all staff to determine the best option for assistance ✸ Maintain trust and confidentiality ✸ Display understanding, caring and non-judgmental attitudes ✸ Work closely with parents/caregivers to address issues and needs ✸ Contribute to maintaining an inclusive school culture ✸ Display our school values ✸ Engage enthusiastically and collaboratively in professional learning opportunities

Rights of Principal Class	Responsibilities of Principal Class
✸ To be valued and respected ✸ To work in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment ✸ To be shown courtesy and cooperation ✸ To know their property is safe ✸ To work in a clean and tidy school ✸ To be supported to love what they do	✸ Provide leadership to school staff and children ✸ Ensure staff, children and the wider school community understand their responsibilities ✸ Ensure staff and children have the resources, equipment and materials to assist them in the process of teaching and learning ✸ Provide ongoing opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning

	✸ Engage enthusiastically and collaboratively in professional learning opportunities ✸ Ensure the school curriculum, which takes into account the varying needs of specific children where practicable such as children with disabilities and children from non-English speaking backgrounds, is taught and assessed to a high level ✸ Encourage parent participation in all aspects of the school ✸ Develop community partnerships ✸ To be up to date with current pedagogy and innovations ✸ Contribute to maintaining an inclusive school culture ✸ Display our school values

Rights of Parents/Carers	**Responsibilities of Parents/Carers**
✸ To be shown courtesy and cooperation and to be made to feel welcome ✸ To feel valued and respected ✸ To participate in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment ✸ To be informed about their child's progress	✸ Value and respect the staff of the school and other members of the school community ✸ Ensure regular attendance at school and promote positive behaviour at all times ✸ Work positively with the school to address matters of concern such as learning, wellbeing or behaviour ✸ Follow through with recommendations that will improve the educational or wellbeing opportunities of children ✸ Reinforce and display the school values with children ✸ Assist with maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all children by acting as a responsible role model ✸ Participate in opportunities to support student learning for example attend parent/teacher interviews, support the home reading program ✸ Contribute to maintaining an inclusive school culture

The school complies with the rights of the children under the *Disabilities Discrimination Act 1992.* The standards cover enrolments, participation in all aspects of school life, curriculum development, student support services and harassment and victimisation. 'Reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate children's disabilities. The school's physical environment caters for children with disabilities as needed.

The school has considered in the development of these policy guidelines the following legislation which directly impacts on these Engagement and Inclusion guidelines.

- **Equal Opportunity Act 1995**
- **Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005**
- **Education and Training Reform Act 2006.**

The school has a commitment to implementing programs that help children develop their social and emotional competencies.

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 reviews*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx

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

4. Identifying students in need of support

Dohertys Creek P-9 College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Example School 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

5. 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, racism, 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

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 Dohertys Creek P-9 College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

Dohertys Creek P-9 College values the input of parents and carers, and we 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 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.
- The need for a high rate of attendance will be articulated to parents and children. The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school. All primary student attendance is recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers; Years 7 -9 attendance is recorded every period. Absences are aggregated on our CASES21 database and communicated to the Department of Education and Training. The Department of Education and Training and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records. The Principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained. The Principal, Assistant Principal and administration staff will contact (by phone) parents/carers of children with unexplained absences each day. The Principal/Assistant Principal will contact parents/carers of children with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences. Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding child attendance will result in a formal attendance

conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Department of Health Human Services, Child First and/or the Attendance Officer (Department of Education and Training - Regional Office).

- A return to school plan can be implemented to assist in the reintegration of children after a prolonged absence.

8. Evaluation

Dohertys Creek P-9 College 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
- SOCS

Dohertys Creek P-9 College 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 and staff training
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- Attendance
- Student Engagement
- Child Safe Standards
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Students with Disability
- LGBTIQ Student Support
- Behaviour - Students
- Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Restraint and Seclusion

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy

- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

Policy last reviewed	15th May, 2024
Consultation	School Council
Next scheduled review date	May 2026