School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Policy

(Ratified by School Council: November 2017)

1. PURPOSE

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) is a broad range of systemic and individualised strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes in schools, whilst preventing opportunities for problem behaviour. The key attributes of SWPBS include preventive activities, data-based decision making, and a supportive problem solving orientation.

A safe and orderly school environment is important to learning. Disruptive classroom behaviour is known to interfere with learning and is a cause of stress and concern for students, teachers and families.

Most children start school with the social skills they need for success. They have learned these socially valued behaviours from their parents, families, carers, early childhood learning experiences and their social networks. Children learn behaviours very quickly, but often they also learn "misrules" or behavioural errors.

Across a large proportion of schools, examples of behavioural errors include a student swearing when they get something wrong, raising their voice to get teacher attention, crying to avoid doing work, and fighting, threatening or embarrassing others in order to get certain things, such as social attention from their peers, or to be included in games.

At Upwey South Primary School, SWPBS is referred to as *School Wide Behaviours for Learning (SWPBL).* This terminology is used as the key purpose of the framework is to provide students, staff and the community with a structure in which to learn and develop expected behaviours, which in turn promote greater opportunities to engage in the learning of the curriculum.

Why are School Wide Positive Learning Behaviours an important part of the USPS Learning Culture?

SWPBL provides students with the tools and mindset to sustain their own learning growth through a clear framework of self-efficacy. Combined with a rigorous academic program, this learning framework enables learners to deeply apply their skills, knowledge, and social-emotional awareness to the world around them. At USPS, we understand that problem behaviour manifests itself to serve a purpose for the student, and can often be related to the fight, flight, freeze (F3) response.

The fastest way to turn problem behaviour around is by explicitly telling students what behaviour is expected, modelling this behaviour, and teaching students acceptable and appropriate ways to interact with their community.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Engagement Policy, which articulates the expectations of the school community in relation to student engagement, including strategies to address bullying, school attendance and behaviour.

2. RATIONALE

The Victorian Government has made a $5.9 million investment in infrastructure to support SWPBS across the state. Strategies recommended by the Department of Education and Training (DET) include:

- defining and teaching explicit school-wide and classroom behavioural expectations
- establishing mechanisms for recognising and rewarding positive behaviour
- establishing and communicating consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for challenging behaviour
- establishing school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/or behaviour difficulty
- developing school-wide and classroom processes for ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilising evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

source: Promoting Positive Behaviour and Preventing Behaviour Issues.
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/promotingposbehaviour.aspx
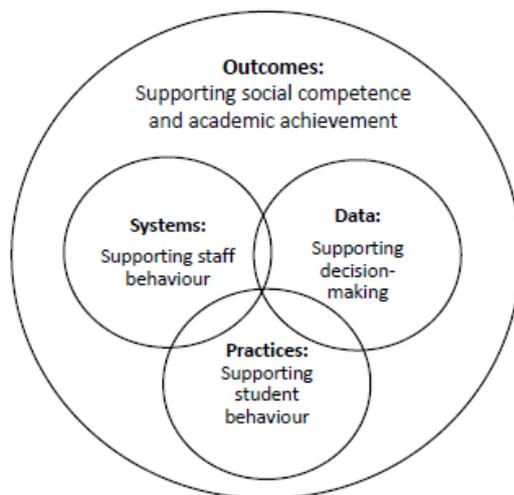
Positive student behaviours are most effectively developed and supported through relationship-based whole-school and classroom practices, with clearly communicated behavioural expectations.

In the classroom, quality planning and instruction that is tailored to the needs of the students can further prevent and reduce challenging behaviour.

Some students exhibit challenging behaviour, which requires additional support and interventions to address this behaviour and to develop positive behaviours.

Why do children misbehave at school?

Through data tracking of student behaviours, schools are able to use evidence based approaches to address misbehaviour and identify patterns in students. Misbehaviour in schools is often associated with outburst of anger, either physical or verbal.

All behaviours are a form of communication.

In most primary-aged children this outburst of anger can be linked to the student exhibiting a loss of control due to the F3 response. This is often caused by the student feeling;
- *isolated* (eg: left out of a game)
- *threatened* (eg: hitting another child because they felt targeted)
- *overstimulated* (eg: too many rules in a game cause confusion)
- *unfairly treated* (eg: by the teacher or a group of peers)
- *physiologically unwell* (eg: hungry, tired, injured, sleep deprived).

In rare circumstances, children from trauma-related backgrounds will exhibit challenging behaviours without reason. This requires intensive and immediate action and support from the school.

There are many potential influences on student behaviour, and many factors that can lead to behaviour that is challenging for schools to deal with.

These include:
- **biophysical factors**, such as medical conditions or disabilities
- **psychological factors**, including emotional trauma or lack of social skills
- **behavioural/social factors**, including where a student's problem behaviour has been learned through reinforcement, consequences or adaptation to social practices. For example, a student with a learning difficulty repeatedly misbehaves knowing that he/she will be removed from the class and this will avoid his/her learning difficulty being exposed.
- **historical community factors**, including for Koorie students whose family member/s had difficult, sometimes traumatic, experiences of school and government agencies
- **cultural factor**s, for example Koorie community 'Sorry Business'
- **student group dynamics**, such as bullying and teasing, cliques or student apathy or hostility.
- **environmental factors**, for example the level of classroom noise or classroom seating arrangements
- **classroom organisation issues**, such as inconsistent routines, inadequate materials or obliviousness to cultural differences
- **teacher behaviour**, for example boring or disorganised lessons, over-reaction to misbehaviour or over-reliance on punishment.
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In many cases, there is no single "cause" of challenging behaviour, but it is the result of several factors operating in combination.

When seeking to understand challenging behaviour, it is important to understand the role of behavioural triggers.

Triggers are actions or events that play a role in prompting particular behaviours. Triggers can be used deliberately by teachers to elicit correct student behaviour. For example, if a teacher wants students to listen, he or she will generally call for their attention (sometimes using a signal) and wait for them to be quiet, thereby triggering the desired attentive behaviour.

Sometimes actions or events in the classroom may be a trigger for some students to exhibit challenging behaviour. For instance, a teacher's instruction to students such as *"put your books away and take out a piece of paper so we can start writing"* might act as a trigger for a student with learning difficulties, who may exhibit challenging behaviour in order to avoid completing the work, which could potentially reveal that they are struggling.

Whether or not a particular action or event is a trigger for challenging behaviour will depend on the individual student and the environment or setting in which it takes place. The instruction above might produce very different behaviour if it is shouted in a large, noisy classroom rather than made in calm voice to a small, attentive and quiet group of students.

A crucial element of any response to a student's challenging behaviours is identifying the triggers for that particular student.

When triggers are identified, teachers and other school staff are then able to more easily avoid these and also can start to develop and use other triggers to elicit positive behaviour.

Source; Managing Challenging Behaviour
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/studentbehaviour.aspx

The Three Tiered Framework of SWPBL

SWPBL uses a tiered intervention framework which is:

Tier 1 (75% - 85% of students)- prevention of problem behaviours through good classroom practice and the building of relational trust between staff and students.

Universal actions for all students, including:
- clear and explicit signage of expected behaviours
- school wide recognition of positively behaving students, through both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards/ incentives
- explicit school-wide social-emotional skills program

Tier 2 (10% – 20% of students)- identifies and provides targeted supports for individual students at risk for developing challenging behaviour.

Targeted actions for groups of students, including:
- social skills groups
- targeted check-ins with trusted adults, such as Welfare Officer or Principal
- classroom behaviour interventions, such as seating arrangements, modified learning tasks

Tier 3 (< 5% of students)- provides individualised and intensive interventions for students with significant support needs.

Individualised actions for individual high-risk students, including:
- intensive counselling and check-ins with trusted adults, such as Psychologist or Principal
- daily communication with family, sharing collective responsibility for negative behaviours
- positive reinforcement of proximity for desired behaviours
- clear consequences and follow through for unacceptable behaviours
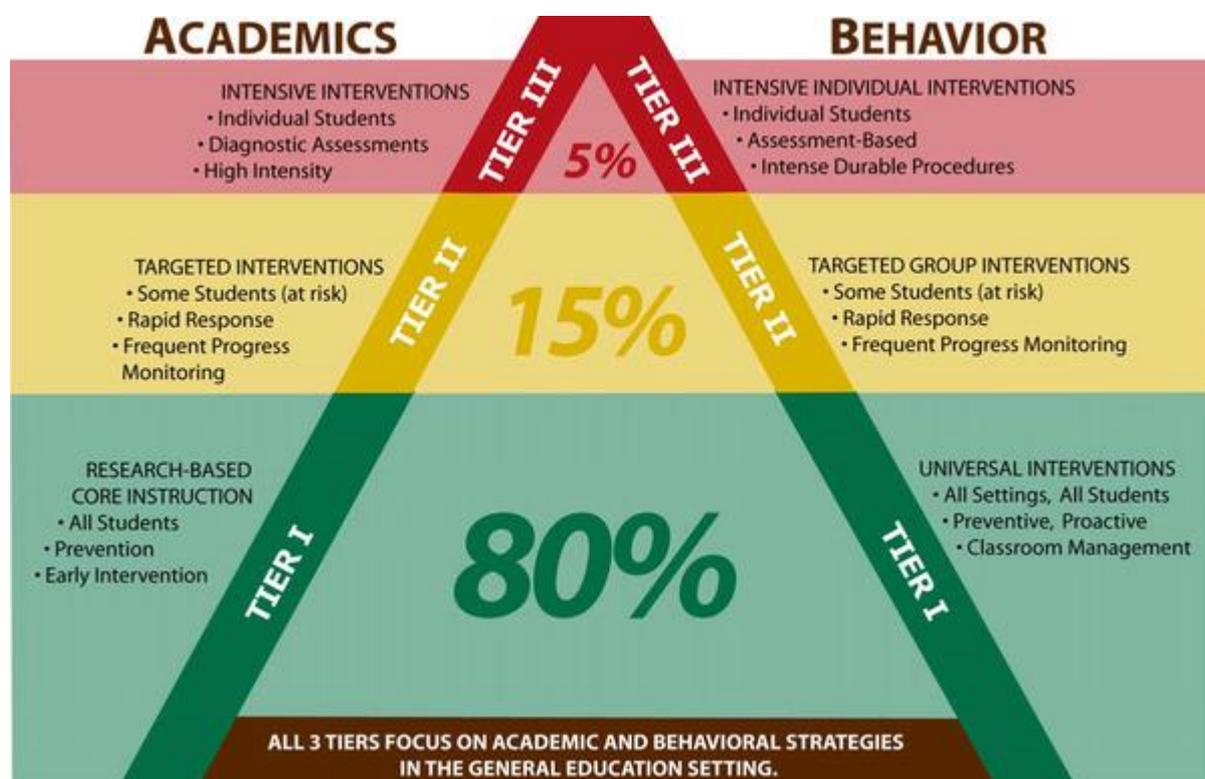
Summary of the Rationale

Children can be described to as 'attention sponges' meaning that they seek out and soak up attention from those with whom they want to interact, be it conscious positive attention or subconscious negative attention.

SWPBL treats the giving of attention like we would use a light switch: when a child is doing the right thing we turn on the light (the attention); when they are doing the wrong thing we turn off the light (the attention).

As parents, we are very good at doing this when our children are toddlers, but can easily forget how effective it can be when they are older. We must remember that children, even in the senior years of schooling, are still learning the ability to self-regulate their emotions.

SWPBL is an evidence-based program and takes a considerable amount of professional learning and support to become embedded in a school culture. When applying SWPBL, the teacher provides 'direct and explicit feedback' to those students who are making positive choices. When you view this in practice in a classroom, it has a clear impact upon a child's sense of self–confidence and also impacts upon promoting positive behaviours from others around them. Those students who make the right choices (Tier One) become self-motivated learners through the positive feedback of their teacher. Those students (Tier Two) who are often referred to as "copy-cats" adjust their behaviour to mimic and seek the attention being given to Tier one students.

What SWPBL is not...

SWPBL involves the ignoring of negative behaviours of a student that do not directly endanger themselves or another student, as opposed to highlighting this behaviour with attention.

Examples are: calling out in class, speaking over other children, tantrums and the likes.

Whilst SWPBL focusses upon positive reinforcement, it also involves consequences for negative behaviour.

These consequences are discussed with the input of the student, once they have come out of the state referred to as 'child-like', meaning that they are calm and have had time to reflect upon their actions.

SWPBL is not the ignoring of dangerous or threatening behaviours.

If a student acts in a manner, which involves the endangering of themselves or another child, then staff step in to stop the behaviour.

If a student destroys another child's property, staff step in to stop the behaviour.

If a student vilifies another student, staff step in to stop the behaviour.

If a student destroys school property, staff step in to stop the behaviour.

3. GUIDELINES & IMPLEMENTATION

The following Tiers outline which behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable at Upwey South Primary School.

These behaviours will be displayed around the school, in a matrix which is based upon our school values of *Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.*

There are three levels of USPS Behaviour Matrices, being:
   a) Whole-School (<u>always</u> behaviours)
   b) Level Specific Behaviours (age appropriate and linked to academics)
   c) Class and task specific (linked to targeted groups, such as a select program)

Tier One Behaviours: Encourage & Acknowledge

The following behaviours are acknowledged and encouraged by staff:
- Talk Moves
- Attentive listening
- Staying on task
- Meeting class expectations
- Good choices made in difficult situations
- Quality of learning effort
- Assisting others in the classroom/yard
- Gains made
- Self monitoring
- Respecting others

Suggested actions that can be taken to encourage and acknowledge a student if their behaviour has been positive:
- Personalised meaningful feedback from the teacher, can be written or verbal
- Student of the Week Awards
- Class Dojo Points
- Sending work to the Principal for acknowledgement
- Sending work to a Buddy Grade/Teacher
- Notes in student diaries
- Informing parents – phone calls, emails, letters to home
- Individual Reward Charts

Tier Two Behaviours: Ignore, Remind & Redirect

Staff should remind the student to make positive changes in an attempt to redirect their behaviours:
- Calling out during class discussions
- Consistent interrupting
- Off-task during work time
- Off-task talking
- Leaving the room, staying within the building
- Flipping, tapping and moving small objects
- Distracting others
- Yelling/screaming out to get attention
- Frustrated swearing at self (straight to remind & redirect)
- Students being the "boss" of other students

The addressing and redirection of Tier Two behaviours should be done with a calm, respectful manner by the staff member. Body language and the physical location of the teacher should be utilised to redirect these behaviours.

Tier Three Behaviours: Immediately Step-In and Stop

For the safety of the student/s involved and others, staff should immediately step-in and stop the student when the following behaviours or similar behaviours occur:
- Fighting
- Throwing equipment at others
- Destroying other's work or school property
- Comments of a sexual or racist nature
- Excessive & constant swearing
- Endangering others safety or putting themselves in danger
- Negative self-talk
- Self harm
- Ignoring direct & repeated instructions
- Kicking, punching, throwing items, spitting, biting
- Trashing a classroom
- Unsafe use of any equipment or learning tools
- Targeting or bullying of particular students
- Stealing of property

If any of these behaviours are occurring the following steps should be taken:

- Address the child in a calm, respectful manner
- Explicitly state the desired replacement behaviour
- Seek the assistance of another staff member if required
- If safe to do so, remove the student to a buddy grade for an agreed time to reflect and redirect

If the student is endangering others and it is unsafe to remove them, seek the assistance of another staff member and remove those affected to a safe space.

Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour

Discipline procedures are based on procedural fairness and corporal punishment is not permitted.

At no time is it acceptable for a class or collective group to be held responsible and/or face the consequences for the poor behaviour of an individual student in which they were not directly involved.

If a student displays Tier Three Behaviours (other than self-harm or negative self-talk) then the student is required to fill out a Reflection Sheet with the guidance of a staff member. This Reflective Sheet is then used as the prompt to hold a discussion with the student as to why the behaviour escalated, what can be done in the future to prevent it, and to determine a suitable consequence.

For all students who complete a Reflection Sheet, a staff member will contact the parents on the day of the incident and inform them of the details.

If other students have been impacted upon by the Tier Three behaviours of a peer, then a staff member will contact the parents of the impacted students.

A restorative discussion will be held with the students and staff involved, using the SWPBL Matrix as the tool for directing the conversation.

Discipline Procedures

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Engagement Policy.

As schools have the ability to define their own set of behavioural expectations, there is no common set of behaviours that can be universally regarded as challenging (note this relates to individual school's behavioural expectations and not the grounds for suspension and expulsion which are set and common to all government schools).

Disciplinary measures should always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour, and are best employed in combination with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour.

The Education Training and Reform Act (2006) prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any Victorian Government school and school discipline policies must include a statement that reflects this requirement.

As a DET school, Upwey South Primary School is bound to act within DET guidelines and Disciplinary Measures, which are detailed below.

Source: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/discipline.aspx

Disciplinary Options for School Principals

In-school discipline/ Withdrawal of privileges

Schools can withdraw student privileges as a consequence of breaching classroom or school behavioural standards. The specific privileges that are withdrawn will vary between schools and even students at the same school, however they may include things such as losing the right to engage in a selected activity. These decisions will be made on an individual basis and in consultation with the parents of the student.

When withdrawing privileges as a disciplinary measure, schools should ensure that:

- The withdrawal is time-limited
- The reasons for and period of the withdrawal is clearly communicated to the student
- The student is made aware of the behaviour standards expected in order for the privileges to be reinstated
- Consideration is given to the impact on the student's engagement (i.e. where the withdrawal of a privilege may contribute to a student's risk of disengaging from school, strategies are put in place to maintain student engagement during the withdrawal).

Withdrawal from class

If a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class or where there is possibility of harm to others, that student may be temporarily removed from regular classroom activities. In more serious cases the student may be required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.

Schools have a duty of care to ensure that students are supervised at all times, including when they are removed from a class. Withdrawal from class does not constitute formal school exclusion such as suspension (including in-school suspension) or expulsion.

Detention

Detention is an appropriate response for a wide range of less serious classroom and school behaviour breaches. Detention can effectively reinforce to students the importance of maintaining appropriate behaviour standards. During detention teachers may instruct a student to finish school work which has not been completed in regular classroom time as a result of the behaviour, new work or other duties. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this.

After-school detentions are not utilized at Upwey South Primary School.

Exclusion from school

In some instances it may be appropriate to suspend or expel a student who consistently compromises the safety and order of the school in order to protect the learning environment for remaining students and continue with effective teaching.

Suspension and expulsion are serious disciplinary measures and are best reserved for incidents when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response or where there is an immediate threat to another person and immediate action is required.

Suspension

Suspension is the process of excluding a student from the standard instruction or educational opportunities being provided to other students at the school for part of a day, a full day, or multiple days. **http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/suspensionconsiderations.aspx**

Grounds for suspension

In order for suspension to be an option, the following conditions must be in place:

The student's behaviour must have occurred:

- whilst attending school;
- or travelling to or from school;
- or while engaged in any school activity away from the school;
- or travelling to or from any school activity.

The student's behaviour must meet one or more of the following conditions:

a) behaves in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;

b) causes significant damage to or destruction of property;

c) commits or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;

d) possesses, uses or sells or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;

e) fails to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;

f) consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parent/carer status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sex; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes;

g) consistently behaves in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.

For incidents between students that occur outside of school hours or in locations other than those listed above, a suspension cannot be used as a response. The impact of cyberbullying (and other behaviours) outside of school hours/off school premises on schools is acknowledged, however, if the behaviour occurs solely outside of school hours/grounds suspension is not an available recourse.

If incidents outside of school hours are connected to behaviour that does meet the grounds and location requirements for suspension, this external behaviour may be considered when determining the response to an in-school incident.

Authority to suspend a student

Only principals have authority to make the final decision to suspend a student. This authority cannot be delegated.

School staff may provide advice to inform the principal's decision whether to suspend a student and may assist in the management of the student's behaviour and/or in communications with the parents, carers or relevant persons. Principals hold ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all processes are followed, correctly.

In-school suspension

When considering the decision to suspend a student, it may also be useful to explore an in-school suspension. An in-school suspension is where the student is excluded from the standard instruction or educational opportunities being provided to other students, but can still undertake educational activities on the school premises for the period of the suspension.

In-school suspensions should focus on encouraging the student to exhibit more positive behaviour, to increase their level of participation and where appropriate, to learn problem solving and/or conflict resolution skills.

Options for in-school suspension include:

- Having the student accompany an experienced teacher/appropriate staff member to their classes for the day
- Participating in a work-based in-school suspension (e.g. working outdoors or preparation of educational materials)
- Providing a dedicated room or area where students can complete school work under appropriate supervision.

The same process (including record-keeping) must be followed for in-school suspension as for out of school suspensions.

Immediate suspensions

The principal may implement a suspension with immediate effect if the student's behaviour is such that they are putting the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, or any other person at significant risk.

Where an immediate suspension is imposed, the principal has a duty of care to provide supervision of the student until they can be collected by a parent, carer, or an emergency contact nominated by the parent or carer. If the parent, carer or emergency contact is unable to collect the student, the student must be adequately supervised by a member of staff until the end of the school day.

It may be appropriate to implement a suspension with an immediate effect whilst the student is on an excursion or school camp. In these situations, if a student's parent, carer or emergency contact is unable to collect the student, they will need to be supervised until the end of the camp or excursion. If this is the case, it is suggested that the student be removed from any activity organised as part of the excursion or camp. It may also be suitable to assign the student an appropriate task or school work to go on with.

Period of suspension

Suspending a student can have serious implications for the student's engagement in learning therefore suspension should be applied for the shortest time necessary. In determining the period of suspension, the principal must note:

- The period of suspension must not exceed five school days.
- The suspension must not result in the student being suspended for more than 15 school days in the school year unless there is prior written approval from the Regional Director.
- If the period of the suspension is longer than the days left in the term, the principal should consider the likely disruption to the student's learning before imposing a suspension that will continue into the following term.

The relevant person

Due to the seriousness of suspension and expulsion, Ministerial Order 625 requires that students who are subject to suspension and/or expulsion processes have a 'relevant person' to participate in the process to support and advocate for them. For most students this will be a parent or carer.

In situations where the parent or carer is unavailable or unwilling to act as the relevant person for their child, they can nominate an alternative relevant person.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the process of permanently excluding the student from the school in which he or she is currently enrolled. As the most extreme disciplinary measure available to a principal, it should only be used after other forms of behaviour management have been exhausted and the school can demonstrate evidence that this has occurred. The student's behaviour must also be of such magnitude that expulsion is the only available mechanism.

Expulsion cannot be implemented as a consequence for events of a novel nature such as one-off pranks that do not cause any harm to other students or members of the school community.

Grounds and procedures for expulsion are set out in Ministerial Order 625.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/expulsionconsiderations.aspx

Grounds for expulsion

In order for expulsion to be an option, the following conditions must be in place:

The student's behaviour must have occurred:

- whilst attending school; or
- travelling to or from school; or
- while engaged in any school activity away from the school; or
- travelling to or from any school activity

The student's behaviour must meet one or more of the following conditions:

1. behaves in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person
2. causes significant damage to or destruction of property
3. commits or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property
4. possesses, uses or sells or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons
5. fails to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person
6. consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parent/carer status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sex; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes

The student's behaviour must also be of such magnitude that expulsion is the only available mechanism. In this regard, the principal must consider the need of the student to receive an education compared to the need to maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff at the school and the need to maintain the effectiveness of the school's educational programs.

Under Victorian Law, in deciding whether to expel student, principals must undertake an assessment of that course of action under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. In addition, when determining whether to expel student with a disability, principals must be sure that

reasonable adjustments have been made to assist the student to manage the behaviours where this is a manifestation of disability.

Authority to expel a student

Only principals have authority to make the final decision to expel a student. This authority cannot be delegated.

School staff may provide advice to inform the principal's decision whether o expel student and may assist in the management of the student's behaviour and/or in communications with the parents, carers or relevant persons. Principals old ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all processes are followed correctly.

Removing a student from school while considering an expulsion

If a student's behaviour is serious enough to warrant expulsion and poses danger to staff and students, a suspension with immediate effect may be implemented while he expulsion is being considered.

If consideration and/or implementation of an expulsion is going to take longer than the maximum suspension period of five consecutive days, principals can apply to the Regional Director for an extension.

4. RELATED LEGISLATION

Ministerial Order 625 Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

5. RELATED POLICIES

Privacy Policy

Student Engagement Policy

6. POLICY EVALUATION

Evaluation will be conducted every two years by the Educational Policies Subcommittee.

7. DUE DATE FOR REVIEW

This policy is due to be reviewed in November 2019.