

Pleasant Street Primary School

Student Engagement & Well-Being Policy



PleasantStreet
PRIMARY SCHOOL

To be read in conjunction with
*Effective Schools are Engaging Schools –
Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

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Table of Contents

1. School Profile Statement	3
2. Whole-school Prevention Statement	4
3. Rights and Responsibilities	5
3.1.Guiding Principles	5
3.2.Equal Opportunity	5
3.3.Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities	5
3.4.Students with Disabilities	5
3.5.Bullying and Harassment	6
3.6.Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community	8
4. Shared Expectations	9
5. School Actions and Consequences	10
6. References	12

1. School Profile Statement

Our school is a vibrant and forward thinking community of learners. We are situated on the southern shores of Lake Wendouree in Ballarat. The school has provided significant educational services dating from its foundation in 1877. Pleasant Street Primary School is proud of its tradition and looks forward to the future with confidence.

The very committed professional teaching team work together to ensure effective, consistent and engaging programs are planned and implemented. The school is actively engaged in providing our students with a curriculum appropriate for the 21st century. Professional learning and renewal is actively encouraged and supported for our staff.

The curriculum is enhanced by a variety of extra-curricular activities including excursions and camps, special event days, sports programs, school concert and performance groups, instrumental music tuition, debating teams, University of NSW competitions, and student leadership programs.

The Special Needs program is a key element of our school providing many children with disabilities and /or learning difficulties the opportunity to become successful and valued participants at our school. A range of special needs programs is offered to students identified as being 'at-risk' and programs to support our higher achievers continue to be an important focus.

We recognise and value the importance of the partnership between the home and the school in the development and learning of each child. The family school partnership is highly valued and well supported by a high-level of participation. The school enjoys excellent community support. The community is kept well informed of school events and programs through strong communication links and this assists in the maintenance of enthusiasm, spirit and pride.

School Council is committed to the continuous improvement endeavours that are practised within the school. Sub-committees are active in their support of educational and operational practices and procedures.

The school has maintained and continues to strive to develop a stimulating, safe and strong learning oriented environment for all members of its school community.

Our Purpose

Pleasant Street Primary School aims to provide a safe, nurturing and challenging environment that promotes enthusiasm for learning and prepares individuals to become reflective and valued members of society.

In order to deliver our core purpose our school will:

- Demonstrate exemplary teaching and learning.
- Encourage and support innovation and reflection.
- Build strong partnerships between school, home and the wider community.
- See each member of our community as an individual.
- Recognise and celebrate efforts and achievements.
- Implement the Child Safe Standards

Our Values

The qualities that we value at Pleasant Street Primary School are; respect, honesty, excellence, resilience and creativity.

2. Whole School Prevention Statement

At Pleasant Street Primary School, our school culture is built on our five values; respect, honesty, excellence, resilience and creativity.

- ★ We demonstrate **respect** by displaying an attitude of caring and consideration for ourselves, others and the environment.
- ★ We demonstrate **honesty** by being truthful and trustworthy in action and word.
- ★ We demonstrate **excellence** by striving to do and be the best we can.
- ★ We demonstrate **resilience** by endeavouring to respond positively to challenges and disappointments.
- ★ We demonstrate **creativity** by developing our personal talents to bring new ideas into being.

The Student Engagement and Wellbeing Team support the development of our culture through:

- ★ The exploration of social and emotional intelligence programs to address our students' learning needs.
- ★ The development of classroom agreements based on our school values.
- ★ The surveying of parents Prep to Year 6 to develop benchmarks of the quality of our family school partnerships.
- ★ The promotion of connectedness across year levels through family groupings (Tomodachi groups) and multi-age activities.
- ★ The implementation of single gender opportunities in the Middle Years of schooling.
- ★ The surveying of Years 3 to 6 students to develop cohort data for student connectedness.
- ★ The provision of milestone celebrations across all year levels.

Our school aims to encourage increased student connectedness, particularly in the Middle Years, through a personalised learning and inquiry approach within the Senior Unit. Additionally, we strongly promote student leadership opportunities and students actively contributing to our local and global communities.

Pleasant Street Primary School aims to maintain below average levels of absenteeism and we work to continue to reduce absenteeism by supporting families and individual students with attendance issues as well as improving the wellbeing, connection, and engagement of all students.



3. Rights and Responsibilities

3.1 Guiding Principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

3.2 Equal Opportunity

The Equal Opportunity Act (1995) sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

3.3 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) outlines a vision for 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.

All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions.

3.4 Students with disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education (2005) clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992). The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- The nature of the student's disability.
- His or her preferred adjustment.
- Any adjustments that have been provided previously.
- Any recommended or alternative adjustments.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- Costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum.
- Costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers.

- Benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers.
- Any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The Disability Discrimination Act and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

3.5 Bullying and harassment

Bullying:

- ★ **Bullying** is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying due to age, size, status or other reasons.

There are four broad types of bullying:

- ★ **Direct physical bullying:** includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
- ★ **Direct verbal bullying:** includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
- ★ **Indirect 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. Indirect bullying includes lying and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate or mimicking. Encouraging others to socially exclude someone and damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.
- ★ **Cyber bullying** is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos/drawings).

Examples of cyber bullying behaviour are:

- Teasing and being made fun of.
- Spreading of rumours online.
- Sending unwanted messages.
- Defamation.

Cyber bullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

What bullying is not:

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

- ★ **Mutual conflict:** involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- ★ **Social rejection or dislike:** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- ★ **Single-episode acts:** of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

Cyber bullying:

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly.

This includes:

- The language you use and the things you say.
- How you treat others.
- Respecting people's property (e.g. copyright).
- Visiting appropriate online sites.

Behaving safely online means:

- Protecting your own privacy and personal information.
- Selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute.
- Protecting the privacy of others.
- Being proactive in letting someone know if there is something is 'not quite right' - at home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher.



Harassment:

- ★ **Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Subtle: (The most common)

They include:

- Offensive staring and leering.
- Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference.
- Racist or smutty comments or jokes.
- Questions about another's sexual activity.
- Persistent comments about a person's private life or family.
- Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body.
- Offensive name calling.

Explicit: (obvious)

They include:

- Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc.
- Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing.
- Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal.
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail.
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks.
- Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography.
- Requests for sexual favours.

Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

In summary:

The effects of harassment or bullying include:

- Poor health – anxiety and/or depression.
- Lower self esteem.
- Reduced study performance.
- Missed classes and/or social withdrawal.
- Reduced career prospects.

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied, they should tell the person being harassed or bullied that the incident has been witnessed and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is bullying or harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

If you are being harassed or bullied you should:

- Tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with.

All concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.



3.6 Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Our school community includes students, staff and parents/carers.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Our aim at Pleasant Street Primary School is to provide our students with an environment where their rights, feelings and property are respected. Everyone has the right to be safe and happy and to learn and play in a supportive environment. Everyone has the responsibility to respect the rights of others to learn, to play and to be safe and happy.

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be treated with respect. - Learn and play, without interference. - Feel safe, secure and happy at school. - Express their ideas, feelings and concerns. - Expect their property to be safe. 	Students have the responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate fully in the school's educational program. - Attend regularly. - Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. - Respect the right of others to learn. - Develop themselves as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.

Rights and Responsibilities of Staff

The Staff Code of Practice for Pleasant Street Primary School applies to the professional behaviour of all school staff in the provision of a nurturing and challenging environment that promotes an enthusiasm for learning that prepares individuals to become reflective and valued members of society.

Rights	Responsibilities
Staff have the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be treated with respect. - Work in an orderly and cooperative environment. - Be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student. 	Staff have the responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy. - Assess and plan for effective learning. - Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. - Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers play a special role in the development of their child's sense of our school's values: Respect, Excellence, Resilience, Creativity and Honesty. Parents/Carers also act as one of the most influential role-models within a child's life. It is the expectation of the school community that all parents model acceptable behaviour at all times within the school setting.

Rights	Responsibilities
Parents/Carers have the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be treated with respect. - Expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others is encouraged. - Work in partnership with the school to support their child's academic, physical, social and emotional growth. 	Parents/Carers have the responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Model positive behaviours. - Promote positive educational outcomes for their child by taking an active interest in their child's educational. - Ensure their child's regular attendance. - Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning. - Support the school in maintaining a safe and

4. Shared Expectations

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole-school community. Shared expectations are:

- ★ Jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students.
- ★ Clear and specific.
- ★ Focused on positive and pro-social behaviours.
- ★ Focused on prevention and early intervention.
- ★ Supported by relevant procedures.
- ★ Consistent, fair and reasonable.
- ★ Linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

Our school has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, can effectively engage in their learning and can experience success.

Our Mission

We aim to provide a **safe**, nurturing and challenging environment that promotes an enthusiasm for learning and prepares individuals to become reflective and valued members of society.

Our Values

The qualities that we value at Pleasant Street Primary School are: Respect, Honesty, Excellence, Resilience and Creativity.

We demonstrate:

- ★ Respect by displaying an attitude of caring and consideration for ourselves, others and the environment.
- ★ Honesty by being truthful and trustworthy in action and word.
- ★ Excellence by striving to do and be the best we can.
- ★ Resilience by endeavouring to respond positively to challenges and disappointments.
- ★ Creativity by developing our personal talents to bring new ideas into being.

Our Shared Expectations

School shared expectations include:

- ★ Inclusive and differentiated teaching practices.
- ★ Promoting positive partnerships between home and school to enhance student connectedness to school.
- ★ Developing community partnerships to engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success.
- ★ Developing and providing of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning and well prepares students for their future.
- ★ Using restorative practices when appropriate.
- ★ Providing of social and emotional wellbeing programs.
- ★ Promoting awareness of others and empathy across local and global perspectives.
- ★ When disciplining students, focusing on behaviours, not the individual.
- ★ Encouraging and supporting students to rebuild broken or damaged relationships.



5. School Actions and Consequences

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

- ★ Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments through the joint development of rules and agreements.
- ★ Providing personalised learning experiences.
- ★ Acknowledging and praising positive student behaviours.
- ★ Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision making such as in our School Leader and Junior School Council programs.
- ★ Providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning.
- ★ Implementing school-wide positive and educative behaviour support strategies such as our Principal Awards, the weekly Kindness Award and 'Fun and Games'.
- ★ Providing and promoting pastoral care beyond the normal classroom structure through activities such as multi-aged activity days and Tomodachi (Friendship) Groups.
- ★ Promoting student welfare by developing caring relationships between peers via whole-class treat days and our Buddy Program.

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

- ★ Understanding the student.
- ★ Regularly communicating student behaviours to parents/carers.
- ★ Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by students and consistent implementation of our student code of conduct by teachers.
- ★ Providing consistent school and classroom environments with a focus on positive behaviours and praise.
- ★ Scaffolding the student's learning program.

Broader support strategies include:

- ★ Involving and supporting parents/carers.
- ★ Involving the Student Wellbeing Coordinator.
- ★ Mentoring and/or counselling.
- ★ Convening student support group meetings through our school's Special Needs Taskforce.
- ★ Developing Individual Learning/Behaviour Plans.
- ★ Providing broader educational programs and experiences.
- ★ Involving community support agencies, when appropriate.

Disciplinary Measures

The following disciplinary measures may be used in response to challenging student behaviour:

- ★ Withdrawal of privileges and/or participation in special events.
- ★ 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. The student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time. Parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals.
- ★ Play time detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties. No more than half the time allocated for any break may be used for this work.
- ★ After school detention - when students are required to undertake detention after school, this will not exceed thirty minutes. The principal will ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings

in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

- ★ Convening of a support group.
- ★ Development of a behaviour contract.

Corporal punishment is not permitted in our school.

Suspension and Expulsion Discipline Procedures

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures outline in the DEECD's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines, following the operations and procedures as specified in Ministerial Order 625 – Suspensions and Expulsions.

A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

6. Engaging with families

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.

1. Evaluation

Pleasant Street Primary School 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

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Child Safe Policy

Code of Conduct

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in Sept 2018 and is scheduled for review in 2020

References

<i>The Student Engagement Policy Guidelines</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/engagepol.aspx
<i>Charter of Human Rights</i>	http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
<i>Disability Standards for Education</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/legislation.aspx
<i>Effective Schools are Engaging Schools</i>	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
<i>Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx
<i>Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Requirements</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/humanrights.aspx
<i>Student Behaviour Guidelines</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentbehaviour.aspx
<i>School Performance Framework</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/schoolperformance.aspx
<i>VIT Teacher Code of Conduct</i>	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/conduct/victorian-teaching-profession-code-of-conduct/Pages/default.aspx
<i>Ministerial Order 625 - Suspensions and Expulsions</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/participation/minorder625.PDF
<i>Disciplinary Measures</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/discipline.aspx