



## School Discipline in Government Schools Policy

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### Overview:

Good discipline is fundamental to the achievement of government priorities for the public school system. In line with this, schools must have a school discipline policy which is developed in consultation with school community members. The policy must contain four components. These are:

- The discipline code or school rules.
- Strategies and practices to promote positive student behaviour, including specific strategies to maintain a climate of respect.
- Strategies and practices to recognise and reinforce student achievement.
- Strategies and practices to manage inappropriate student behaviour.

### Context:

Cessnock West Public School and our community work together to provide quality learning environments which are:

- Inclusive.
- Safe and secure.
- Free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation.

### Strategies for managing inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour:

#### ***Parent Interview/Counsellor Support:***

The school is not solely responsible for consistent unacceptable behaviour of students. This is a shared responsibility of parents and students in partnership with teachers. If the student continues to offend then a referral to the learning support team and the principal is necessary. Parent permission for counselling will be actively sought. If the student does not respond to counselling at this level then parents will be notified. The principal, parents, student and school counsellor will then work together to support the student through their difficulties.

#### ***Peer Support:***

The Peer Support Program empowers young people to support each other and contribute positively to society. In primary schools, Peer leaders work with multi age groups of 8-10 younger students for 8 sessions. Primary students are trained as Peer leaders through a 2 day leadership training program.

#### ***How does the Peer Support Program support other initiatives?***

The Peer Support Program is outcomes based and designed to integrate into school curricula.

The program supports complementary initiatives such as student wellbeing, Special Religious Education (SRE), buddy programs and anti-bullying.

It enhances a positive school culture. Many initiatives and strategies are promoted, emphasising the adoption of a whole school approach to include teachers, parents and students.

It is flexible enough to accommodate school and community needs.

The Peer Support Program enhances Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) through discussing the weekly PBL focus with the students in their group and awarding a PBL token at the end of each Peer Support lesson.

**Zones of Regulation:**

The Zones of Regulation Program addresses the social and emotional needs of students K-6. The program uses a cognitive behaviour approach to teach self-regulation by categorising the different ways we feel into four zones. The Zones curriculum provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of, and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their emotional needs, and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts. . All classes and teachers participate in explicit lessons focusing on developing student self-regulation. All staff and students have a common language to discuss and manage emotions, and resolve problems.

**Playground Management:**

Playground Duty is an active duty and each teacher is responsible for patrolling all of the area supervised, supervise in a pro-active manner and fully investigate complaints from students. The teacher on playground duty handles minor misdemeanours. This may involve a discussion, correction of behaviour, mediation between students, walking with the teacher. The school's "Supervision of Students Policy" will be referred to for consistent and fair playground behaviour management.

**Planning Room:**

Planning Room is a time-out process for students involved in playground and serious classroom incidents. Planning room provides students an opportunity to reflect on their actions as well as discussing and resolving any issues associated with the incident. Students are referred by the teacher/s who witnessed the incident using SENTRAL. As a result of a student attending planning room, their parents/caregivers receive a notification letter explaining the incident and the number of days the student will attend planning room for. Parents are asked to sign a slip at the bottom of the notification, indicating that they are aware of the incident and that they will attend planning room for the number of days indicated.

**Anti-Bullying Statement:**

Schools exist in a society where intimidation, harassment and victimisation occur. Bullying should be taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form. Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation.

*\*Please refer to DOE Bullying Policy for further Information*

**Student Attendance:**

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staffs, as a part of their duty of care, need to monitor part or whole day absences.

***CWPS currently follows the Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures (2015).***

**Partial Attendance, In-School Suspension, Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion from School:*****DET Suspension and Expulsion Outline:***

The school follows the policy of the Department of School Education as described in its *Procedures for the Suspension and Expulsion of School Students (October, 2014)*.

***Suspension:***

The principal of Cessnock West Public School will suspend any student who:

- is in possession of a suspected illegal drug
- is violent or who threatens serious physical violence
- is in possession of a prohibited weapon
- is persistently disobedient
- engages in criminal behaviour related to the school

Suspension may be a short or long suspension of up to and including twenty (20) school days.

Parents will be notified by letter or phone when their child is displaying inappropriate behaviours and a period of partial attendance, in-school suspension or suspension is foreseen.

#### Re-entry to School:

A student will re-enter the school by attending an interview with the principal and class teacher where appropriate. During the interview the school will require an undertaking from the parents/caregivers that they will work in partnership to assist the student re-join the school community. This will include the provision for counselling and access to behaviour modification programs as required.

For further information please refer to *Procedures for the Suspension and Expulsion of School Students (October, 2014)*.

#### **Responsibilities of Parents:**

Parents must ensure:

- Their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in school.
- Their children who are enrolled at school attend every day the school is open for instruction.
- They provide an explanation for absences to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence through means such as telephone call, written note, text message or email. The 7 day timeframe for explaining absences is a requirement of the Education Act (1990).
- They work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school. This includes communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.

#### **Responsibilities of Principals:**

The Principal must ensure:

- The school regularly evaluates and addresses school attendance through the school plan.
- Open communication on issues affecting student attendance is promoted with parents.
- Effective strategies are in place to contact parents where there is a pattern of attendance causing concern or the parent has failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence.
- School staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised.
- All cases of unsatisfactory attendance, including part day absences are investigated promptly and school based factors impacting on attendance are addressed.
- Early identification of students at risk of developing poor school attendance patterns through strategies such as regular roll checks.
- Attendance reports from roll checks are generated at least fortnightly and tabled at Learning Support Team or attendance meetings for follow up by appropriate staff members.
- The school's Learning and Support Team in partnership with parents identify and implement strategies that address the learning and support needs of a student with attendance patterns of concern.
- Parents, students and the school community are regularly informed of the importance of school and attendance requirements.
- Effective referral and support networks are established so that students, whose attendance is identified as being of concern, and their families can be connected with relevant services within the department and with local external agencies.
- Communication, collaboration and information sharing occurs with other services and agencies to enhance the effectiveness of interventions with students and families.
- Any other child protection concerns underlying school attendance issues (including educational neglect) are managed consistent with the Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.
- If concerns include not sighting the child principals must, as soon as possible contact the NSW Police Force to request that a child safety check be undertaken.
- Consideration is given to the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG), specialist advice and professional judgement, where there are concerns about suspected risk of harm.

- Other decisions trees can be used if the underlying issues impacting on school attendance are also of concern. For example, care concerns, neglect: supervision, or child /young person is a danger to self and others.

***Responsibilities of School Staff:***

- Provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- Promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning activities that acknowledge the learning and support needs of students.
- Maintain accurate records of student attendance.
- Alert the principal, or staff member responsible for monitoring attendance, when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent or carer within required timeframes.
- When nominated by the principal, liaise with external agencies, arrange referrals, coordinate involvement of the school with other services and agencies working with students, and provide feedback about outcomes to the principal.
- Who have concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person must report their concerns to the principal.

***Record keeping requirements:***

School attendance records must include:

- Register of Admission to be retained permanently (now maintained on the Enrolment Registration Number System - ERN)
- Written notes, records of verbal explanations and records of electronic explanations for absences from parents. This advice is to be retained for two years from the date of receipt.
- An Attendance Register (roll), to be retained for three years. In a case where a student has an accident requiring an accident report, all attendance records should be retained until the year the student reaches the age of 25 years.
- In secondary schools, a record of the attendance at each lesson, to be retained until the end of the school year.
- Information detailing a student's absences each year, kept on the student's file until seven years after the student has left. In the case of a student who has had an accident necessitating an accident report, the record should be retained until the student reaches the age of 25 years.
- Records for Certificates of Exemptions from attendance and enrolment must be kept consistent with the requirements of the Exemption from School – Procedures.

**References**

NSW Department of Education School Attendance Policy

NSW Department of Education Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures

NSW Department of Education Exemption from School Procedures

NSW Department of Education Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedure