

Gunbower Primary School

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Learning For Life



GUNBOWER PRIMARY STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



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.

Gunbower Primary School 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Gunbower Primary School prides itself on being a family centred, welcoming school with an inclusive, friendly and happy learning community atmosphere. The school is set in the rural township of Gunbower approximately 200kms north of Melbourne. We have approximately 50 students from Prep through to Grade 6. The school comprises of an original two-

classroom building plus a 2011 BER building (containing flexible learning spaces for 2/3 classes and an administration suite).

The school provides a safe and supportive environment with dedicated and enthusiastic teachers and support staff. Students are encouraged to strive to become their best versions of themselves as happy, healthy individuals who are able to contribute to, and flourish within their community. Our school motto and emphasis is on “**Learning for Life**”. We actively encourage student voice, and our school expectations are deeply embedded in everything we do. They are: **Be responsible, Be respectful, Be a learner and Be safe.**

Gunbower Primary School places a strong emphasis on developing school, family and community partnerships in a small rural district. A very strong partnership exists between parents and staff, with high levels of parent participation through School Council, classroom helpers, Parents Club and fundraising activities.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Purpose: The core purpose of Gunbower Primary School is to provide a comprehensive education for all students so as to enable them to reach their academic, social, emotional and physical potential in the digital age.

We aim:

- To promote integrity, lifelong learning and the attainment of excellence.
- Ensure that teaching and administration staff develops professionally and in unity.
- Encourage participation in school programmes by the wider school community.

Values: Supporting Gunbower Primary School's Purpose are five core values. They underpin the ethos of Gunbower Primary School.

Respect – ‘You matter to us’

- We will set realistic expectations and will appreciate individual differences.

Learning – ‘Each individual and the environment is valued, respected and cared for’

- We will respect and support individual learning styles as reflected through our teaching practices.

Teamwork – ‘To be a team player’

- We will create a school environment, which promotes co-operative teamwork, goal setting and involve the wider school community

Equal Opportunity - ‘Equality for all’

- We will provide an inclusive curriculum that acknowledges and caters for similarities and differences and will value professional contributions.

Trust – ‘Everyone should feel secure and valued’

- We will appreciate the ability of others and praise their efforts and show individuals that we trust them by giving them appropriate responsibility and feedback. We will provide structures to foster trust within the community.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: gunbowerps.vic.gov.au

3. Engagement strategies

Gunbower Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing*
- *creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive*
- *welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning*
- *analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, Parent Survey data and school level assessment data*
- *using an agreed instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
- *adopting a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching*
- *incorporating our school's behaviour expectations into our curriculum and promoting them to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community*
- *carefully planning transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents*
- *students having the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, including programs such as:*
 - *Berry Street Education Model*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
 - *Bullying. No Way!*
 - *Solving the Jigsaw*
 - *Safe Schools*
- *developing programs and incursions to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management/mindfulness programs)*

Targeted

- *Staff will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their grade, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *Staff will seek support from colleagues through the weekly staff meeting student wellbeing focus*
- *All Koorie students will be connected with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer and have an Individual Learning Plan*
- *All students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *Staff will seek SSS support when working with students who have experienced trauma*

Individual

- *Student Support Groups (bringing together the carer, teacher, principal and other relevant agencies to support a student at risk)*

- *Individual Learning Plans and Behaviour Support Plans*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *Referral to Student Support Services (eg speech pathology, psychologist, social work)*
- *Referral to ChildFirst (provide case work service and link families with relevant support services)*
- *Referral Lookout (services to improve educational outcomes for children and young people living in out-of-home care)*

Gunbower Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These include:

- *building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
- *meeting with students and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school*
- *developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan*
- *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up*
- *referring the student to:*
 - *Student Support Services*
 - *Appropriate external supports such as allied health professionals, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst*

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- *being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing*
- *collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student*
- *monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
 - *with a disability*
 - *in Out of Home Care*
 - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Gunbower Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Gunbower Primary 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, 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 the Principal.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and behaviour expectations. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Gunbower Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Gunbower Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines (see appendix). Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- *informing 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 Principal*
- *restorative practices*
- *"time out" during part of recess or lunch*

- *restricted play*
- *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.

7. Engaging with families

Gunbower Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will 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
- 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
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Gunbower 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
- school reports
- parent survey

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 15th June 2020 and is scheduled for review in June 2022.

9. Appendix

- Behaviour Expectations Matrix
- Staged response checklist for student behaviour issues
- Restorative Practice
- Naming it and saying sorry

Behaviour Expectations Matrix

 Our School Wide Expectations				
	Be Respectful	Be Responsible	Be a Learner	Be Safe
INSIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Polite • Take Turns • Listen to others • Use 'Inside Voice' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove shoes • Stay on task • Take care of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared for class • Listen carefully • Have a go/ stay on task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk and watch where you are going • Sit properly on chairs • Carry scissors correctly
OUTSIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care of equipment • Look after everybody • Include everybody 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play in correct areas • Use equipment correctly • Be a good sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a go at new games • Join in with others • Practise skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only run in open areas • Remain inside school grounds • Play by the rules
COMPUTERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle with care • Use own laptop • Respect other students computers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use correct program • Return computer to correct storage space • Shut down properly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to use a variety of programs • Stay on set task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk when carrying laptop • Be cybersafe • Delete unknown senders
EATING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit quietly • Chew with mouth closed • Take small mouthfuls • Keep lunch area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put rubbish in the bin • Eat your own food • Wait to be dismissed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model good behaviour and good manners • Help younger students • Try new foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit still and remain in one place when eating • Only touch your own food • Walk to and from area
BATHROOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flush toilets • Keep clean- seek help if needed • Consider others privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press soap once • Ensure taps are off • Use quiet voice • Walk in and out of toilet • Tell an adult if there is a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use during recess/lunch • Ask to go during class • Use correct urinal / toilet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk in and out • Report any spills or accidents to a teacher

Staged response checklist for student behaviour issues

Stage 1: Promoting positive behaviour and preventing behavioural issues	
Suggested strategies	School actions
<p>Define and teach school-wide expectations for all.</p>	<p>Explicitly teach the 4 school behaviour expectations (be a learner, be responsible, be respectful and be safe).</p> <p>Maintain and sustain a professional learning community whereby teachers' underlying motivation is the success of their students.</p> <p>Students and staff are encouraged to reach their individual, social, emotional, and academic potential by recognising and rewarding achievement, effort and excellence and sharing learning and good practice.</p>
<p>Establish whole school positive behaviour programs.</p>	<p>Promote student wellbeing through a proactive focus on relationship development to include the utilisation of whole school approach to children's mental health and wellbeing. Good mental health is integral to academic learning and vital for social and emotional learning of life.</p> <p>Staff will continue to play a crucial role in building children's self-esteem and sense of social, emotional and academic competence and confidence. Structured and strategically planned professional development for all staff for implementing the following approaches to positive behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berry Street Education Model • Restorative Practice • Respectful Relationships • Cyber Safety • Bullying. No Way! • Solving the Jigsaw (including how to "name it" and say sorry/receive a sorry)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible incorporate the support of SSS to run programs such as Mindfulness and Drumbeat.
Establish consistent school-wide processes to identify and support students at risk of disengagement from learning.	<p>Teachers to know their students. Provide a personalised learning program including individual goals to empower students to learn how to learn</p> <p>Further develop and enhance the inquiry approach and facilitate the development of independent and intrinsically motivated learners who are willingly engaged in planning and developing their learning based on their skills and abilities</p> <p>Further develop student voice, being involved in determining their own learning pathways in conjunction with teachers</p>

Stage 2: Responding to individual students exhibiting challenging behaviour	
Suggested strategies	School actions
Assess the behaviour and its functions, influences, and triggers (include student, parents and school staff as appropriate).	<p>Gain information relating to the behaviour from staff and students</p> <p>Speak with parents</p> <p>Speak with student/students involved</p> <p>Utilise Restorative Practices and Jigsaw/Respectful Relationships approaches</p>
Develop Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan (involve parent or carer)	<p>Create a Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan using the DET templates and guidelines</p> <p>Discuss and explain the Behaviour Management Plan and/or Individual Education Plan with student and parent or guardian</p>
Consider if any environmental changes need to be made.	<p>Student may need to be seated in a different area of the classroom.</p> <p>Student may need to be removed to another classroom, Principal's office.</p> <p>Student may need time out of the classroom to re-focus</p> <p>Give the student 1:1 support where needed</p> <p>Student may need to have a modified program in place to support, which will be constantly monitored and re-evaluated.</p>
Teach replacement behaviours.	<p>Utilise approaches such as Berry Street Education Model, Restorative Practices, Jigsaw, Respectful Relationships</p> <p>Utilise the school behaviour expectations matrix</p> <p>Include expected replacement behaviours as part of behaviour support plan</p> <p>Utilise processes such as peer support and mentoring where appropriate</p>

<p>Engage Student Support Services and/or community services to undertake assessments and/or provide specialist support</p>	<p>Discuss with parent/guardian and obtain Parent/Guardian consent to make a referral for Student Support Services</p> <p>Contact Learning Places Connect</p> <p>Inform parent/guardian of available community services</p>
<p>Establish a student support group</p>	<p>Conduct regular SSGs in line with DET guidelines</p>
<p>Implement appropriate disciplinary measures that are proportionate to problem behaviours</p>	<p>When the rights of others have been violated a staged response will be implemented:</p> <p>Stage 1: Restorative conversation with a staff member and others involved in order to repair relationships and encourage students to take ownership of their behaviour (If a student refuses to engage in the restorative process, staff members may choose to implement punitive consequences)</p> <p>Stage 2: Restorative conversation with the Principal and others involved</p> <p>Stage 3: Parental involvement and behaviour support plan put in place if required</p> <p>Severe behaviours: For severe behaviours, such issues will be referred directly to the Principal.</p> <p>Punitive Consequences If a student does not engage in the restorative practices process, then other punitive consequences will be implemented, such as removal of privileges.</p> <p>Loss of privileges include:</p> <p>Loss of part of recess or lunch playing time</p> <p>Loss of playground privileges e.g. restricted play</p> <p>Removed to other classroom</p> <p>Removed to Principal office</p> <p>Exclusion from excursion/camping program</p> <p>In house suspension Parent/Guardian informed</p> <p>If damage is done to school property, the student is expected to help clean/repair/replace the damaged item. If a cost is involved, the family will be contacted to meet the costs of this.</p>
<p>Consider out-of-school behaviour management options such as Student Development Centres (if available)</p>	<p>To be done in consultation with Student Support Services.</p>

Berry Street Education Model

The Berry Street Education Model is a positive education initiative based on proven positive education, trauma-informed and wellbeing practices that enable students' academic and personal growth. The model reinforces and sustains cognitive and behavioural change, thereby re-engaging young people in learning and progressing their academic achievement. Currently, all teaching staff have participated in the 4 day Berry Street training.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practices (RP) is a philosophy and continuum of processes that is based on the premise that repairing harm done to people and relationships is a very effective way to resolve conflict, influence positive behaviour and build a safe, productive and caring community. A core belief is that the wrongdoings and misbehaviours that bring disruptions to classrooms, and the hurtful behaviours that are so often associated with conflict, are primarily not just "breaking rules", but actually result in harm to individuals, groups and the whole school community.

In a school setting, restoration of relationships for effective learning is the ultimate goal of restorative practices.

In response to this, RP encourages a profound fairness, and a culture of listening across our school community. It is based on our school's values that build an ethos of respect, inclusion, responsibility, personal best and integrity as well as a commitment to relationships and the development of social and emotional competencies.

People involved in RP develop personal awareness and responsibility while learning and using lifelong skills such as active listening, expressing emotion, facilitating dialogue and problem-solving.

RP is also based on the belief that the people involved in a conflict, wrongdoing, or misbehaviour, need to be actively involved in the process of resolution. Imposed (and purely punitive) solutions can be less effective and less educative.

Restorative Practices help build capacity to enable students to self-regulate behaviour and contributes to the improvement of learning outcomes. Its philosophy is integrated into everyday school life and is supported through our other student engagement programs such as Jigsaw, Bounce Back, Circles etc.

What does a Restorative Classroom look like?

"A restorative classroom setting is one that values dialogue through an inclusive approach where everyone expects to be heard, and through this participatory process students develop the capacity to learn in a practical way that emotions are an important and legitimate expression of healthy dialogue. This helps students to deal with conflict, tensions and difference in respectful ways that engenders trust, empathy, responsibility, and fosters healthy relationships." Lesley Oliver, Terry O'Connell, Lyn Doppler 2007

The Principles of Restorative Practice

Foster awareness in the student of how others have been affected.

Avoid scolding or lecturing. This often results in the student reacting defensively. It distracts from noticing other people's feelings.

Involve the student actively. Instead of simply doling out punishment, which the student is expected to accept passively, a restorative intervention encourages the student to speak. They face and listen to those

who have been affected by their inappropriate behaviour. They help decide how to repair the harm and make a commitment to this. The student is held accountable.

Accept ambiguity. Often fault is unclear and people can agree to accept the ambiguous situation.

Separate the deed from the doer. We can recognise a student's worth, their virtues and accomplishments while disapproving of their wrongdoing.

See every serious instance of wrongdoing and conflict as an opportunity for learning. Negative incidents can be used constructively to build empathy and a sense of community in the hope that there is a reduction of negative incidents in the future.

Affective Questions

These questions are provided to school staff and may to assist in managing conflicts or potential conflict situations and working towards resolution.

When something's gone wrong

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

To the person who has been hurt/affected

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Naming it and saying sorry

If things go wrong at school we know how to

NAME IT

1. **Tell the person in a calm but strong voice:**
 - o to stop it
 - o what it is you don't like
 - o how it makes you feel.
2. **If it happens again:**
 - o NAME IT again.
3. **If it doesn't stop:**
 - o ask an older student to help you
 - or
 - o get help from a teacher.

Billy, stop it. I don't like it when you ignore me. It makes me feel left out.



Don't be a BYSTANDER.

If you see someone being unkind to someone else, help them to **NAME IT**.

Saying Sorry



1. Think about what you have done and understand that you have done something wrong. Have you hurt someone's feelings or hurt the person? Broken a rule or damaged someone's property?
Don't say sorry just to get out of trouble or to get someone off your back.
2. Say 'I'm sorry' and mean it sincerely from your heart.
For example:
"I am sorry for hitting you
raising my voice
being jealous
excluding you
copying your work
gossiping about you"
3. Change your behaviour
It's about you wanting to change your behaviour. A sincere 'sorry' means that you really will make an effort not to do that behaviour again.

Receiving a Sorry



1. Say it with a strong voice:
'Thank you for saying sorry. I really didn't like it when you hit me
yelled at me
excluded me
talked about me behind my back'
2. **DON'T SAY 'that's OK',** because what happened to you is not OK. You have a right to be safe.

Solving the **figsaw**  CENTRE FOR NON-VIOLENCE
© Making violence against women & children

School Contact Information

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