



STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

The Poowong Consolidated School Council believes that for the school to be effective, it should provide a safe and happy learning environment which meets the needs of our children at all levels of their primary school life.

As a means of promoting such an environment, the school has a Student Code of Conduct and the following principles underpin this policy:

- All individuals are to be treated fairly and with respect
- Students have a right to work in a secure environment where they feel free to develop to the fullest, their talents, interests and ambitions without intimidation
- Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which expectations of care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others will be encouraged
- Parents/carers accept their obligation to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Teachers have a right to expect that they will be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and cooperation
- The School Principal and staff members accept their obligation to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Code of Conduct
- Our school considers that a positive approach to behaviour is essential in fostering a school climate within which personal responsibility and self-discipline will be developed. Therefore everyone has responsibilities.

Our policy is based on the recognition of student, teacher/ancillary staff, and parent/carer rights and responsibilities.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students have the right to:

- to be safe
- to learn and do their work
- to feel comfortable

All students have the responsibility to:

- to treat everyone with respect and thoughtfulness
- to participate in all school learning activities
- to follow instructions
- dangerous activities and violence are unacceptable

- intimidating behaviour and harassment are unacceptable
- to keep their hands and feet to themselves
- to report any dangerous activity to the teachers
- to look after your own and others property
- to stay within the school grounds unless with a teacher
- remain out of the buildings during recess and lunchtime unless you have an "Inside Pass"
- to not climb on buildings, trees or unsuitable equipment
- to not run inside or where there are many people about, including concreted walkways
- to know where you can play particular games safely and to respect the rules around this

Teacher/Ancillary Staff Rights and Responsibilities

All teachers and school support staff have the right to:

- be free from disruption in the teaching and learning process
- be treated fairly and with respect by all members of the school community
- the support and assistance of other staff
- implement the discipline policy
- expect strong support from the school community in the discipline process

All teachers and support staff have the responsibility to:

- continually provide good teaching and learning practices and evaluate teaching strategies
- provide adequate supervision
- encourage awareness and understanding of school rules
- fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Code of Conduct
- request advice and assistance when needed
- treat others as they would like to be treated themselves

Parent/Carer Rights and Responsibilities

All parents/carers have the right to:

- be recognised as the major influence in their child's development
- have access to staff at convenient, mutually agreed times
- participate in the total life of the school community
- be kept informed and given the opportunity to express themselves on matters of school policy
- be informed of inappropriate behaviours by your child
- be treated fairly and with respect by all members of the school community

All parents/carers have the responsibility to:

- encourage good behaviour habits in their children
- support the school in its effort to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- support the school in its discipline procedures associated with implementation of the Code of Conduct

- treat others as they would like to be treated themselves

School Strategies

All students receive a copy of the School Handbook upon enrolment

Social skills programs, School Wide Positive Behaviours and “Positive Start to School” programs support children to understand the school rules and values

We believe that the discipline of children is a shared responsibility between home and school.

Consequences for inappropriate behaviour are decided upon by students and teachers together and are consistent across the school. These are displayed in classrooms and specialist rooms.

Further, our school considers that a positive approach to behaviour is desirable in order to foster the concept of self-respect and fairness to children, teachers and the wider community. In order to develop a positive approach to behaviour our school is committed to the following strategies to:

- give constant positive reinforcement
- develop self-esteem
- encourage friendship
- develop pride in the school and the wider community
- develop understanding of, acknowledge for and respect of differences
- encourage sharing, tolerance and compassion amongst all children
- enhance and encourage parent/carer teacher contact
- be consistent and fair in expectations of behaviour and their consequences
- use a Restorative Justice model for resolving disputes or conflict between students
- encourage organised and responsible play within our playground
- involve children in decision-making aspects of the Code of Conduct
- ensure that children understand the Code of Conduct
- be consistent in reinforcing the Code of Conduct

School Rules

Because one of the rights is the right to be safe and secure, we consider the following forms of behaviour are intimidating or dangerous and are therefore unacceptable:

- fighting, bullying or any other form of aggressive behaviour
- throwing sand, stones, sticks or other dangerous objects
- using or carrying weapons (sticks, knives etc)
- harassment (cultural, religious, racial, sexual and disabilities)
- teasing and name calling
- stealing
- playing on the stairs
- graffiti

- leaving the school ground without permission
- riding bikes in the school ground
- running in the school buildings
- climbing trees, roofs or structures other than designated playground equipment
- being in school buildings without teacher supervision
- kicking and other violence-based games
- Being rude to adults in their tone, including the use of swear words

Guidelines for Dealing with Unacceptable Student Behaviour

Although the staff at Poowong Consolidated School believe that discipline is best achieved by:

- providing an interesting, varied and stimulating learning environment
- which caters for the individual needs of all children
- maintaining a busy working tone throughout the school
- The promotion of positive social relationships.

We do however realise instances of unacceptable student behaviour will still occasionally occur.

Given that students understand the school's Code of Conduct and the effect that breaches could have on themselves and others, it is therefore logical that choosing to breach the code should incur some penalty. The penalty should be logically connected to the offences.

The consequences of breaches of our school rules are discussed with students and fair warning will given prior to major consequences being handed out. Consequences range from discussion and warning, to time-out, meeting with parents, suspension, an inquiry and expulsion.

Restorative Practices Approach

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

Consequences which may be used prior to Suspension:

- Withdrawal of privileges
- 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, that 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.
- 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 at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.

The Suspension and Expulsion Process

This process exists for severe breaches of the Code of Conduct and is carefully detailed by the Department of Education and outlined in the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

Suspension (In-School and External Suspensions)

A student may, by order of the Principal of a state school, be suspended if, whilst attending school or travelling directly to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travel organised by the school, the student does any of the following:

- behaves in such a way as to constitute a danger to the health of any staff member, student or any other person assisting in the conduct of school activities
- commits an act of significant violence or causes significant damage or destruction to property, or is knowingly involved in the theft of property
- processes, uses or deliberately assists others to use illegal drugs or substances prohibited by the Department of Education
- fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a Principal or teacher
- consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the educational opportunities of any other student or students
- behaves in a way which threatens the good order of the school's program or facility
- engages in unacceptable discriminatory behaviour (including harassment) towards another person based on sex, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), marital status, the status or condition of being a parent/carer, the status or condition of being childless, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or physical or mental disability or impairment

Expulsion

The School Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school according to the procedures set out below. This power cannot be delegated to any other person at the school level.

Permanent expulsion from a school is the most extreme sanction open to a Principal. Except in the most unusual and extreme circumstances, it will only be used after other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in the school's code of conduct have been exhausted.

The Principal can expel a student from the school if, whilst attending school or directly travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travel organised by the school the student does anything mentioned under suspension and the student's behaviour is of such magnitude that having regard to the need of the student to receive an education compared to the welfare and safety of other students at the school and the need to maintain order and discipline within the school, a suspension is inadequate to deal with that behaviour.

Both the suspension and expulsion processes are guided by a very specific process which involves consultation between the home and the school.

The student, parents/carers, staff, Principal and other support personnel may be involved in developing a behaviour management plan to avoid these drastic steps.

Our student welfare and discipline programs are designed to ensure that, as far as possible, no problem with student behaviour ever reaches this stage.

References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningssupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoo/eoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf

This policy was last ratified by School Council on

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