

EDEN PUBLIC SCHOOL



STUDENT WELFARE POLICY

2015

PURPOSE

The Eden Public School Welfare Policy outlines the strategies and programs implemented by the school community to meet the wellbeing needs of our students. We recognise that each individual must take responsibility for their own actions and that their behaviour ultimately establishes their place in society. The sum total of the individual parts of the Welfare Policy are designed to create an environment where all stakeholders can work and learn in a safe, happy and supportive environment.

DEFINITION

Welfare is a term used to refer to a broad range of social programs that contribute to the wellbeing of all stakeholders.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal and Executive Staff

- Support and nurture a school environment based on a commitment to student welfare.
- Ensure that the whole school community has input into the development and review of the wellbeing policies and practices.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of their roles and responsibilities under the Eden Public School Welfare Policy.
- Provide support, for both teachers and students, to ensure the aims of the Welfare Policy are being met.

Teaching and Support Staff

- Familiarise themselves with the Welfare Policy and be consistent and persistent in its application.
- Actively contribute to the provision of a caring, well managed and safe environment for all stakeholders.
- Participate in the whole school community's implementation of the Welfare Policy.
- Maintain open lines of communication with other staff, children, parents and community members.
- Model all aspects of the Welfare Policy emphasising appropriate dress, speech, behaviour and work habits.
- Listen with empathy and understanding to all stakeholders in all aspects of school life.

Parents

- Be supportive of the school, its' policies, programs, values and ethos.
- Share responsibility for shaping their children's understanding about acceptable behaviour.
- Work with teachers to establish fair and reasonable expectations of the school.
- Ensure children arrive at school prepared and ready to participate in the day's activities.
- Inform the school of welfare matters that may affect the education of children.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED

Students

- Act according to the school's Fair Discipline Policy.
- Contribute to the provision of a safe environment for all those associated with the school community.
- Be an active participant in the learning and teaching process.
- Be a positive role model capable of representing our school with pride.
- Have input into school community decisions including reviews of welfare issues via processes such as Student Representative Council, School Leaders and Prefects.

CORE RULES FOR STUDENTS IN NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The following core rules have been developed to establish consistent expectations of student behaviour in NSW government schools. These core rules form the basis of our PBL values: Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.

All students in NSW government schools are expected to:

- Attend every day, unless they are legally excused, and be in class on time and prepared to learn.
- Maintain a neat appearance, including adhering to the requirements of the school's uniform or dress code policy.
- Behave safely, considerately and responsibly, including when travelling to and from school.
- Show respect at all times for teachers, other school staff and helpers, including following class rules, speaking courteously and cooperating with instructions and learning activities.
- Treat one and other with dignity and respect.
- Care for property belonging to themselves, the school and others.

Behaviour that infringes on the safety of others, such as violence, harassment, bullying, continued disobedience and illegal or anti-social behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated. (NSW Department of Education)

SCHOOL VALUES

Our school values are the qualities to which we aspire to in behaviour and relationships as a school community. They are:

<p>Respect</p> <p>Care for yourself, others and the environment.</p>	<p>Treat others, as you would like them to treat you.</p> <p>Be polite and kind.</p> <p>Be honest.</p> <p>Care for school property.</p> <p>Listen to others.</p> <p>Allow for personal space.</p> <p>Wear school uniform.</p>
<p>Responsibility</p> <p>Do the right thing at the right time.</p>	<p>Follow the rules.</p> <p>Be an active learner.</p> <p>Accept the consequences of your actions.</p> <p>Be in the right place at the right time.</p> <p>Always do your best.</p> <p>Care for your belongings.</p> <p>Keep your hands and feet to yourself.</p>
<p>Resilience</p> <p>Keep calm and carry on.</p>	<p>Be a positive friend.</p> <p>Right choice, right time.</p> <p>Have a positive attitude.</p> <p>Find courage in difficult situations.</p> <p>Be independent.</p> <p>Be persistent.</p>

CODE OF CONDUCT

STAFF

GOOD OR ACCEPTABLE PRACTICE

School and classroom culture

- Develop school and classroom routines or structures that have clear boundaries of acceptable and professional student/teacher interaction;
- Implement Department and school guidelines that help prepare and plan such educational activities as excursions.
- Professional behaviour and supervision levels need to respond to the age of students and the educational context;
- Know the school's student welfare and discipline policies and use behaviour reinforcement strategies that follow these policies;
- Utilise the KidsMatter Framework to provide proven methods, tools and support to help assist teachers to work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced students.
- Develop a non-confrontational behaviour management style;
- Respond to provocative behaviour by students, parents or members of the school community in a non-confrontational, calm manner to help defuse difficult situations. Seek support from colleagues or supervisors where needed. In extreme situations the principal can call police to protect staff and students. Strategies including the use of *Inclosed Lands Protection Act* 1901 and obtaining Apprehended Violence Protection Orders can also be used.

Care and Discipline of children

- Report and document incidents involving physical restraint of students or violence involving students. This provides important information if an allegation is made about the related conduct of a staff member;
- Actively supervise students when on playground duty;
- Clearly instruct and carefully supervise students operating equipment;
- Provide correctional feedback on student work in a constructive way;
- When confiscating personal items, such as mobiles or hats, ask students to hand them to you. Only take items directly from students in circumstances where concern exists for the safety of the student or others, and your own safety is not jeopardised by this action;
- When playing physical sport with children, consider the physiques of students, along with the relative ages and stages of development of all participants.

Teacher-student Relationships

- Participate in social contact with a student only after obtaining informed consent of the student and the parent (and principal where appropriate); such contact includes meetings, sporting events, phone calls or electronic communications, e.g., Facebook, Twitter, emails and text messages;
- Do not invite students into your personal social network site, if it contains personal information or inappropriate comments or images;
- Use appropriate language in all electronic communication;
- When acting as a student's mentor, develop a relationship with clear professional boundaries that cannot be misinterpreted as a personal, rather than a professional, interest in the students; If a student develops a 'crush' on you, inform a supervisor so independent, sensitive advice and support are available;

- Praise and recognise all students when appropriate, so they all feel treated fairly;
- Physical contact with students in a way that makes them comfortable, e.g., shaking hands, a congratulatory pat on the back, or with very young students by gently guiding them or holding their hand for reassurance or encouragement;
- When students, particularly very young children, are hurt and seek comfort it is appropriate to provide reassurance by putting an arm around them;
- Be alert to cues from students about how comfortable they are in your proximity and respect individual needs for personal space.
- If physical contact with a student is required during class activities, such as PE demonstrations or drama lessons, teachers will explain to the students the activity and what type of contact will be involved;
- Be aware of cultural norms that may influence interpretation of your behaviour towards students.

Interaction with students with identified needs

- Be especially sensitive interacting with students who may have poor 'boundaries' for appropriate behaviour after being traumatised by physical, emotional or sexual abuse, because they may misinterpret your actions;
- Schools for Specific Purposes and those in Juvenile Justice Centres have particular requirements for child protection, due to the needs of students. Therefore, careful training, planning, programming, documenting and reporting will help protect students from neglect or abuse, and staff from complaints or allegations.
- Awareness by all staff, including non-teaching staff, of the appropriate strategies to use when interacting with students with identified needs.

POOR OR UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE

School and classroom culture

- Excluding students from a lesson or activity, then leaving them unsupervised in corridors, classrooms or storerooms;
- Leaving a class unattended or dismissing students early from a lesson so that they are unsupervised;
- Not reporting concerns about risk of harm to a child or misconduct of a staff member towards a student;
- Attempting to physically prevent a student from entering or leaving a classroom, unless there is a concern for the safety of the student, other students or staff;
- Closing doors or windows to rooms without checking students are safely out of the way;
- Pursuing a student who is attempting to run away unless that student is in immediate danger or is likely to harm another person;
- Shouting angrily at students to intimidate them;
- Commenting to or about students on the basis of disability, gender, sexuality, cultural or racial stereotypes.

Care and discipline of children

- Public disciplining or humiliating a student as punishment or as an example to other students;
- Throwing an object such as a duster, chalk, ball or book at a student to get their attention;
- Threatening students with physical punishment;

- Corporal punishment, such as hitting, smacking or caning, of students is prohibited;
- Providing inadequate supervision for students while on duty during excursions;
- Not appropriately responding to or referring clear requests from students for medical or first aid attention;
- Arranging activities or meetings alone with a student that are not within school guidelines or that are without the informed approval of a supervisor and, if appropriate, the parent or caregiver;
- Targeting students unfairly for criticism or prejudging complaints from other staff or students about their behaviour based on past conduct.

Teacher/Student Relationships

- Teasing students or unfairly withholding praise from them;
- Putting your arms around students while instructing them on the computer;
- Developing a practice of cheek kissing as a greeting or for congratulating students;
- Repeatedly and unnecessarily touching students on the back, shoulders, arms or legs;
- Allowing a student to sit on your lap;
- Undressing in front of a student, e.g., in PE or Activity Centre change rooms;
- Giving gifts or money to students as a reward or incentive for good behaviour or as a gesture of friendship;
- Conversing about sexual matters unrelated to a syllabus;
- Telling jokes of a sexual nature;
- Making sexually suggestive remarks or actions, obscene gestures or showing inappropriate videos;
- Deliberately exposing a student to the sexual behaviour of others, including access to pornography;

Practices in the following three bullet points are prohibited (and may also be criminal acts):

- Teachers must not have sexual relationships with students. It is irrelevant whether the relationship is homosexual or heterosexual, consensual or non-consensual or condoned by parents or caregivers (the ages of the students or staff members involved are also irrelevant);
- Teachers must not give students alcohol or other drugs (except prescribed in accordance with department and school policy), or encourage or condone the use of alcohol or other drugs by students;
- Possessing, computer downloading or distribution of child pornography.

Interaction with students with identified needs

- Using unnecessary force to make physical contact with a student as a prompt for a verbal instruction or to force compliance;
- Failing to implement strategies negotiated and outlined in individual student management programs;
- Using physical contact to contain confrontational behaviour of students of all ages (particularly those with identified behaviour or conduct disorders) unless there is a concern for the safety of the student, other students or staff.

CODE OF CONDUCT

STUDENT

Eden Public School Students:

- Respect every other student's right to learn and the teacher's right to teach.
- Play safely, fairly and sensibly (No racism, bullying, violence, harassment or intimidation)
- Don't throw sticks, rocks or any other objects.
- Respect their own property, school property and the property of others.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Follow school rules at sport, on buses, camp and on excursions.
- Are punctual.
- Follow teacher instructions.
- Work co-operatively with others.
- Are expected to attend regularly.
- Remain in the school grounds.
- Wear school uniform when at school.
- See the teacher on duty if assistance is needed on the playground.
- Do not bring valuable items to school.
- Respect the rights of others.
- Play in safe areas away from fences, toilets, banks and car parks.
- Walk on the concrete paths.
- Move to classes and lines promptly when the bell goes.
- Are good ambassadors for Eden Public School at all times.

POSITIVE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE

A positive school/classroom climate is vital to maintaining the welfare of all students and staff, both academically and socially. This positive school/classroom environment is achieved when students feel comfortable, safe and respected. The following strategies are used at Eden Public School to maintain this positive environment:

- Following student and staff codes of conduct
- Use of the Positive Behaviour for Learning program (PBL)
- Leadership camps
- Prefects

Current Welfare Programs

PBL

At Eden Public School we are using a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) reward system to encourage student's positive behaviour in all areas of the school. This system focuses on our three key values:

- Respect: Care for yourself, others and the environment
- Responsibility: Do the right thing at the right time
- Resilience: Keep calm and carry on

These key values are explicitly taught to all students through Quality Start followed by a series of lessons during Term One and regularly revisited throughout the year.

Leadership Training

These Leadership activities are a very important part of our welfare program. It gives our Year 6 children the confidence to become Quality Leaders and helps create an environment of support and personal best at our school. The workshops consist of Rick Freeth's Personal Best, the PBL values, Peer and Leadership Support and a reinforcement of Eden Public School Values.

Prefects

All children in Year 6 are given the opportunity to act as a school prefect for a period of three weeks. They assume the role of running the weekly assemblies, coordinating initiatives to encourage positive behaviour and as role models by becoming contact points for the school population. Their efforts are recognised at the conclusion of their three weeks with a presentation at the whole school assembly.

Koori Dance

Our Koori students are given the opportunity to participate in traditional dances under the tuition of elders. This allows students to become positive role models, learn about their culture, and strengthen personal and community bonds. Students participating in the Koori Dance program perform at major events such as the NAIDOC celebrations, Whale Festival, SCLC concert, our school's presentation day and other community events.

Boys Bike Program

Boys identified as needing a positive male role model undertake this program to work in small groups learning new skills under the mentoring of a male SLSO. This hands-on approach allows students to interact cooperatively with each other, learn self-respect, general responsibilities (being on time, knowing where to be) as well as having the responsibility to use equipment/tools properly.

Sporting Schools

The Australian Government's Sporting Schools program is a national initiative that provides primary school children with access to free sport and other structured physical activity programs in the after-school time slot of 3.00pm to 4.30pm. The program aims to engage children in sport and

other structured physical activities and through a positive and fun experience develop a love of sport that inspires them to join a local sporting club. Eden Public School organises a healthy afternoon snack, the activities and provides volunteer teachers to support the implementation of the program. All students are encouraged to participate.

Breakfast Club

Eden Public School is running a Breakfast Club on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 8:20am until 9:00am every week. With the help of the Red Cross, Campbell Page and the school community, we can provide a nutritious breakfast for students who miss out on the most important meal of the day. By having breakfast, it helps improve student's concentration and learning capacity and is also shown to improve school attendance. Breakfast is provided to all children who wish to attend, to ensure children in need are not stigmatised. Breakfast Club is intended as a warm and enjoyable social environment, to encourage children to attend. Children come to Breakfast Club for a variety of reasons, but whatever the reason, every child is welcome.

Social Club

Social Club is a program designed to give students the opportunity to develop social and interpersonal skills with their peers in a supervised, none threatening environment. Students are invited to use special equipment/toys such as Lego in small "sharing" groups. This program runs at lunchtime (Monday to Thursday) and is supervised by a teacher.

Welfare Mentor

Students identified as needing extra support with their welfare in class and especially on the playground are monitored by the school's welfare mentor. This is achieved by providing students opportunities to have positive interactions with peers, younger students, older students and adults. This may be in the format of structured play or undertaking "special roles" such as junior technicians.

Transition to High School

To assist students in moving from Primary School to High School opportunities are provided for our students to visit the local High School and participate in activities, familiarising them with aspects of high school life. Supplementary to this, identified students (Koori, special needs) are provided extra opportunities for small group visits.

Transition to Kindergarten

To assist students in moving from Preschool School to Primary School, a six session orientation program is provided for preschool students to visit our school and participate in activities, familiarising them with aspects of public school life. This orientation program also incorporates senior students acting as a "buddy" to provide a "friendly, familiar face" for the incoming students to relate to. A detailed parent information session is also provided. Supplementary to this, identified students (Koori, special needs) are provided extra opportunities for small group visits.