Kerrimuir Primary School

Student Engagement & Well-Being Policy

Produced in consultation with the school community

To be read in conjunction with

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines

November, 2013

Principal:
School Council President:
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Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy

SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

PURPOSE AND VALUES

- To further develop and enrich our comprehensive teaching and learning programs which facilitate improvements in student learning outcomes.
- To encourage active student, staff and community participation in all facets of our school.

The following values are expected when delivering the above:
- Care for people and the environment
- Achieve our best
- Respect ourselves and others
- Educating your child for the future

SOCIAL — COMMUNITY AND DEMOGRAPHICS:

- The background of the students reflects a growing social and cultural diversity and it is expected that this will continue to be a feature of the school’s demographics.
- Parental involvement is a key feature of the school. They actively support classroom programs, particularly in the Junior School.
- The staff profile reflects a good balance of both gender and experience with all staff demonstrating a positive and professional attitude toward the school.
- The school is situated in a quiet residential pocket of Box Hill North and therefore it is important that we continue to actively market the school to families in the broader Box Hill North area.
- We believe that we have an effective leadership team currently operates at Kerrimuir and it is intended that this profile will be maintained.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- All rooms are well resourced and conducive to effective learning.
- All learning spaces are heated and cooled
- In 2011 the BER (Building Education Revolution) building was completed and students in Grades 5 & 6 now work in an open plan learning space that promotes team teaching
- In 2012 the junior school refurbishment was completed. There are now seven classrooms in the building and range in size from 65 and 75 square metres, the rooms promote team teaching and open plan learning.
- In 2013 the Middle school refurbishment was completed. There are now six classrooms in the building and range in size from 65 and 75 square metres, the rooms promote team teaching and open plan learning.
- The school grounds are well established and maintained through the work of a maintenance person. The school has also sought to further improve the appearance of the grounds by implementing a $60 Maintenance Levy as a part of the annual school fees as a voluntary contribution, funds raised by the Maintenance Levy have been used to employ a gardener.

EDUCATIONAL

- AusVELS will be introduced throughout 2013 in the areas of English, Mathematics, Science and History. There will be ongoing opportunities for staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding through various professional development activities.
- DEECD assessment and reporting procedures are utilised across the school for mid year and end-of-year reporting to parents.
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- Excellent before and after school care programs operate daily to support families. In 2011 the program was outsourced to Camp Australia. The program is very effective and ensures that all students have access to a safe and secure environment before and after school. Since Camp Australia has run the OSHC program numbers have steadily increased in both before and after school sessions.
- Targeted Literacy and Numeracy support and enrichment programs such as Bridges Reading, EAL (English as an Additional Language), and Maths with Ian Blamey, Reading Eggs and Mathletics.
- Individual Learning Plans developed for enrichment and students at risk.
- Students are given the opportunity to attend various extra curricula enrichment programs, which include Wise Ones, GATEWAYS (Gifted and Talented Education, Extension and Enrichment), ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) competitions and The Australian Mathematic Competition.

TECHNOLOGY

- All teaching staff have Notebook computers.
- Classrooms are equipped with at least 5 computers and the Resource Centre houses 28 computers (leased for 3 years commencing 2011) — all computers are networked and have access to the internet. The overall computer to student ratio is 1:3.
- All classrooms are fitted out with Interactive whiteboards.
- All teachers have iPads for classroom usage, class teachers also have access to two sets of four iPads for group work in the classroom.
- In 2014 the students in Grade 5 and 6 will participate in a “1:1 Bring Your Own Device iPad Program”
- The school currently operates an excellent and up to date website. It will continue to be updated and expanded as time and expertise permits.
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WHOLE-SCHOOL PREVENTION STRATEGIES AGAINST BULLYING & HARRASSMENT

At Kerrimuir Primary School, we believe that school should be a positive and enjoyable experience, free from all forms of harassment AND BULLYING. With this in mind, we have adopted a Restorative Practices Approach to behaviour management.

CIRCLE TIME

- All classes participate in daily share circle with a particular focus on developing student’s empathy and EQ (Emotional Quotient/Intelligence).
- All students are encouraged to actively participate in circle time; however students are allowed to pass on their turn.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

- The process of Restorative Practice focuses on repairing student relationships and giving all the students the opportunity to share their recount of the experiences in a fair and just manner.
- Involve all those affected by the conflict to find another way forward, reducing anger and resentment.
- Recognise and encourage the contributions that staff, parents, carers and the community makes in promoting great relationships that enable better behaviour and learning at Kerrimuir.

This approach enables us to:

- Make school a safer, happier place where students’ talents are recognised and rewarded
- Raises attendance levels
- Reduces incidences of bullying
- Provides greater opportunities for support and mediation when conflict occurs

YOU CAN DO IT

You Can Do It! (YCDI) is a program to build emotional resilience and support the development of a positive learning environment. The program is implemented across the school. It provides all children with the foundations for achievement and social-emotional wellbeing.

These foundations are:

- **Getting Along** (mixing well with others, being tolerant and non-judgmental)
- **Confidence** (believing in yourself, taking risks, trying something new)
- **Persistence** (trying hard, not giving up when something feels too hard)
- **Organisation** (planning, following instructions, having supplies ready)

VALUES EDUCATION

At Kerrimuir Primary School, our shared values are:

- Care for people and the environment
- Achieve our best
- Respect ourselves and others
- Educating your child for the future
CREATING A LEARNING COMMUNITY [CALC]

- All students in Grades P-6 participate in the ‘Creating a Learning Community’ program. It strives to create a stimulating, orderly and cooperative working environment for all children in classrooms. It is very important to lay the ground rules, establish procedures and build the structure of the classroom for the year. Staff believe that time spent establishing the building blocks for good learning will pay dividends throughout the year.

  Aims for the program are:
  - To create a climate and tone of warmth and safety
  - To define expectations and practice them
  - To introduce students to the physical environment and materials of the classroom and the school, and teach students to use and care for them
  - To establish expectations about ways the class will learn together in the year ahead

STUDENT WELL-BEING WORKER [SWBW]

In 2012 Kerrimuir Primary School was the recipient of a federal government funding for the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program. This funding has enabled the school to employ a part time student wellbeing worker. The SWBW’s role is to work with the students to develop their relationship building skills, social skills and problem solving skills. The SWBW is responsible for organising and managing lunchtime activities in the yard and providing supportive counselling supports to students.

PEER MEDIATION

In 2011 The Peer Mediation Program was introduced at Kerrimuir with the aims of empowering the students to manage and solve minor conflict between students effectively. The Peer Mediation Program aims to reduce incidences of bullying by providing a school environment that is positive, caring, safe and friendly. Peer Mediation teaches students to resolve low-level conflicts using their peers as mediators. Mediation opens up communication channels allowing the disagreeing students to discuss their problems and come to a resolution with the guidance of the mediators.

Students may develop improved skills in:

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Conflict management

The school may notice results in:

- Improved yard safety
- Reporting of low-level problem situations
- Increased co-operation within the community
**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.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

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

Under the act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:

- age
- breastfeeding
- gender
- identity
- impairment
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status or status as carer
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation
- Personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).

**THE CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006**

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of 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 human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
CULTURAL RIGHTS

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights. All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance web site.

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.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people. 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
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 DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.
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BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

DEFINITIONS

- **Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.
- **Bullying** is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.
- **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) 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.

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.

The effects of harassment or bullying include

- poor health
- anxiety
- depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes
- social withdrawal

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should inform a staff member or trusted adult what happened. However, if your friend is 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.

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

Subtle harassment can 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 harassment can 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
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- Requests for sexual favours
- Extreme forms of sexual harassment may lead to criminal prosecution

Bullying can involve the following:
- Grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching, kicking, pushing and shoving.
- Publicly excluding a person from your group
- Taking or breaking a person’s property
- Knocking a person’s books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- Teasing a person because of their looks

Cyber bullying can involve the following:
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
- visiting appropriate places

Behaving safely online means:
- protecting your own privacy and personal information
- selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- 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.

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/coordinator that you feel comfortable with.

All concerns will be taken seriously and all complaints will be treated confidentially.
## Rights and Responsibilities of Students

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<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students have a right to:</td>
<td>Students have a responsibility to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition.</td>
<td>• Participate fully in the school’s educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Participate fully in the school’s educational program</td>
<td>• Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.</td>
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<td>• As students progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.</td>
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## Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

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<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<td>Parents/carers have a right to:</td>
<td>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged.</td>
<td>• Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours.</td>
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<td>• Promote and reinforce the Kerrimuir’s CARE Values.</td>
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<td>• Ensure their child’s regular attendance</td>
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<td>• Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning.</td>
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<td>• Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.</td>
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## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

<table>
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<th>Rights</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers have a right to</td>
<td>Teachers have a responsibility to</td>
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<tr>
<td>• expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment</td>
<td>• fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy</td>
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<td>• Be informed, within Privacy requirements about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student.</td>
<td>• Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively.</td>
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<td>• Know the content they teach.</td>
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<td>• Know their students.</td>
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<td>• Plan and assess for effective learning.</td>
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<td>• Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.</td>
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<td>• Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.</td>
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**SHARED EXPECTATIONS**

At Kerrimuir, we share high expectations for all students, staff, parents and the community. Some of these expectations include:

- A safe, secure and happy learning environment for all
- Punctuality and high attendance rates
- Encouragement to excel in every aspect of their education
- Involvement and participation in various aspects of the curriculum e.g. swimming, camps, excursions, academic competitions, sporting events, Visual and Performing Arts programs
- Support for school initiatives e.g. Sustainability, Building programs, Parents as Partners
- A strong transition from pre-school to Prep and from Year 6 to secondary school
- A commitment to Restorative Practices as our means of behaviour management

**KERRIMUIR PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF**

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

- Inclusive teaching practices
- Accessible educational provision for all students
- Parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- Community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- Provision of appropriate student services
- Development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

**RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**

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 (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 2001)
- 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).

**DIVERSITY IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Kerrimuir will address and celebrate diversity within our school community. E.g. Japanese day, multicultural days, assemblies, awards, translation services, student support services, personal and whole school professional development plans, Leadership and Level teams, opportunities that enable people to take on a range of responsibilities. The school aims to address diversity by:

- Maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
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- Attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- Increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- Enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- Creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems
**STUDENT WELLBEING**
The Wellbeing Program at Kerrimuir Primary School embraces a number of components under the one umbrella. Many of these are preventative strategies, however when responding to an incident the staff at Kerrimuir use the following strategies;
- Circle Time
- Restorative Practices
- Rethink Program

**CIRCLE TIME**
This is a regular forum when students can think and talk about themselves and others. It is used for class groups, smaller groups and with the staff. It is a time when games and activities are used to encourage and increase an awareness of:
- Understanding and valuing myself
- Understanding and valuing others
- Having positive relationships with others

**RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**
Restorative Practices are ways to build caring communities. People are supported to take responsibility for their actions and repair any harm that has been done. A restorative approach is based on the belief that the people directly involved in the situation are the best ones to resolve the matter. Students involved in an incident have a chance to tell their side of the story and how they believe things can be fixed up. An agreement is then reached, which may still involve discipline procedures.
The advantages of a restorative approach include:
- A safer, more caring environment
- A more effective teaching and learning environment
- A greater commitment by everyone to taking the time to listen to one another

**RETHINK PROGRAM**
As part of the school’s Wellbeing program, teachers can recommend children who are involved in situations in the classroom or the playground spend time in a “rethink” session. They are not detention or time out sessions, more a reflection on a better way to handle a specific situation. Before a child attends a rethink session, a form will be sent home. The child will already have written their account of the situation and the reason for this session. Younger children will have their reason written down for them. The form needs to be signed and returned to school.
If a child brings home a rethink form, the parents need to take the time to discuss with them alternative ways they could have behaved and how they would react if a similar situation arises again. Often the whole story is not told at home and certain details are omitted. Parents are requested to sign and indicate they have followed the Restorative Chat 4 questions format when discussing the incident.
Rethink sessions are a time when the children are encouraged to talk about and come up with strategies reflecting a Restorative Justice approach. Sometimes a second follow up session may be necessary and will be arranged.
This is seen as a positive approach to solving conflicts occurring both in the classroom and the school ground. It is another strategy to encourage students to take responsibility for their own actions.
INTERRUPTION PROCESSES
If a student at Kerrimuir Primary is displaying inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, the staff will take the various individual needs of students into consideration when developing the intervention plan for individual students. These considerations may include:

- Understanding the student’s background and needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student’s learning program

Under no circumstances will staff members use corporal punishment as a form of discipline to manage student behaviour, if an incident occurred where a staff member used corporal punishment Conduct and Ethics would be contacted immediately.

Broader support strategies will include:

- Involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- Involving the student wellbeing coordinator
- Mentoring and/or counselling
- Convening student support group meetings
- Developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- Providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, camps, outdoor education, creative arts
- Involving community support agencies, which may include Child First, Royal Children’s Hospital, KYMHS

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION
When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines. Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures.

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.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- 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. Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.
- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.
- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).
**REFERENCES**

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


Hopkins, B 2002, ‘Restorative Justice in Schools’ Support For Learning, vol 17, no. 3, p 144
