



OTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL



# Student Welfare Policy



**Term 4, 2013**

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# Student Welfare Policy

This policy has been developed in conjunction with NSW Department of Education and Communities: Student Welfare Policy Statement and with the two companion documents: Student Welfare-Developing School Policies and Programs and Student Welfare-Developing and Maintaining Effective Discipline.

## Rationale

Australian society accepts that parents and families have the prime responsibility for the welfare of their children. Otford Public School shares that responsibility with the general community and a range of the community's social institutions. In sending children to this school, parents and carers rightly expect that the students will learn in a caring community concerned for their welfare and well-being.

One of the important skills for life that students need to develop is independence and resilience. Resilience or being able to 'bounce-back' is a powerful tool to ensure students lead happy and healthy lives. Developing a range of coping skills help students develop effective and cooperative strategies as a way of developing positive peer relationships.

Every staff member at Otford Public School has a prime responsibility for student welfare.

## Aims

Through this Student Welfare Policy, the school aims to help its students develop:

- a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction from learning;
- an ability to communicate effectively;
- a coherent set of values to guide behaviour;
- a sense of personal and social responsibility for actions and decisions;
- a sense of personal dignity and worth;
- a sense of cultural identity;
- a feeling of belonging to the wider community;
- a caring attitude towards others and
- an ability to form satisfying and stable relationship.

## CORE Values

The Government recognises the importance of the following core values to the community. These values represent the aspirations and beliefs of the Australian community as a whole, including its concern for equity, excellence and the promotion of a caring, civil and just society.

The following examples illustrate the core values in school community and classroom contexts.

- Integrity
- Excellence
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Cooperation
- Participation
- Care
- Fairness
- Democracy

Through a consultative process with the students of Otford Public School we have selected the CORE values of: **Respect, Responsibility, Care and Cooperation** as the values that are important to us as a school community.

## Policy Components

There are four major interrelated components of the Student Welfare Policy:

1. Learning Support Programs
2. Merit Systems
3. Student Support Programs
4. Discipline Systems incorporating the Fair Discipline Code

These systems are supported and overseen by the Learning Support Team and the Student Welfare Committee, with the Principal and class teachers being members of both committees.

## Implementation

The Student Welfare Policy at Otford Public School will emphasise the positive aspects of students' learning, leadership and behaviour.

In implementing the Student Welfare Policy at Otford Public School staff will:

- provide interesting and challenging learning programs;
- involve students at appropriate levels of decision-making;
- recognise the responsibilities of parents/guardians and encourage their participation in decision-making;
- adhere to a set of clearly stated principles developed in consultation with parents and the local community;
- ensure that the developmental, preventative and remedial measures taken fit within the context of a co-ordinated student welfare policy;
- vary the measures taken to meet the needs of individuals or groups;
- use teaching, counselling, consultation and other approaches as appropriate;
- provide for parent and community consultation when planning, evaluating and varying programs;
- involve students in a range of leadership and developmental programs, and
- ensure learning support programs are implemented through the Learning Support Team.

### Learning Support Team

The Learning Support Team meets regularly to review the learning needs of students. The team develops and implements a range of Learning Support Programs. It also reviews individual student's progress towards stage outcomes and recommends intervention and extension strategies to support their learning.

Teachers are able to refer students to the Learning Support Team for consideration in the various support programs or for assessment by the School Counsellor. This referral process involves the Learning and Support Teacher (LAST) undertaking specific assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses of the students being referred. Should the Learning Support Team decide to refer the student to the School Counsellor for testing, parents will receive a letter explaining the need for the assessment and a Parent Permission Form.

The Learning Support Team conducts review meetings regularly. At these meetings, the team considers students who have been referred for support, provide advice for teachers to support the students learning needs and recommend programs of support to help the student. They also review the learning support process and develop strategies for improvement.

## **Student Welfare Committee**

The Student Welfare Committee may comprise of:

- Principal
- School Counsellor
- Learning and Support Teacher (LAST)

The Committee meets on a regular basis to review individual students, set directions and develop and implement Student Support Programs.

The Student Welfare Committee will be responsible for the evaluation of the current policy for Student Welfare at OPS through a variety of strategies including:

- teacher response and commitment;
- teaching/ learning programs;
- student outcomes;
- community response;
- repetition policy;
- interviews and discussions and
- checklists and Surveys.

This evaluation may become part of the School's Annual Report.

## **School Counsellor**

Our school has access to a school counsellor half a day each fortnight. School counsellors are qualified teachers who have a degree in psychology. They complement and enhance the work of teachers by strengthening schools' student welfare provisions and providing counselling and psychological assessment of students with specific needs. School Counsellors provide feedback to teachers, parents and caregivers about the best way to support the development of student learning, health and general wellbeing. Counsellor referrals are co-ordinated by the school's Learning Support Team.

## **Attendance at School**

The government requires that students are enrolled at and attend a government school or a registered non-government school. All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend that school whenever instruction is provided. Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. We ask parents to inform the school when their child has been absent. This also includes partial absences.

## **Learning Support Programs**

### **Home Reading Programs**

These are conducted by individual classroom teachers and are aimed at stimulating the desire for students to read at home to consolidate their skills. Books chosen are based on the needs of individual students. Books should be at an independent reading level (i.e. easy reading) for each child, to allow them to practise speed, fluency and phrasing. Each child is expected to record their reading in a 'Reading Log' each night. Other reading programs include the Premier's Reading Challenge which encourages regular reading throughout the school.

## **Gifted and Talented Programs**

Gifted and talented programs are designed to meet the needs of specific groups of students. Individual programs are embedded in classroom teaching and learning activities.

## **LAST Support**

The school has an allocated Learning and Support Teacher (LAST) one day per week. This teacher provides support for targeted students, within the classroom and on a withdrawal basis. The Learning Support Team develops a program each term, and identifies students to participate in the program. This teacher also assists and prepares students for NAPLAN and completes follow-up programs following NAPLAN.

## **Support Funding**

The school has a number of students who have been allocated funding to support their learning. The funding is used to employ School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) within the classroom and playground and to provide teacher planning and training time.

## **Merit Systems**

The merit system seeks to identify and reward students who are seen to be setting exceptional examples to others in the school community. A student will receive recognition for a wide variety of reasons.

These include:

- making a valuable contribution to activities taking place within the school;
- initiating some activity or scheme of practical benefit to the school;
- diligence in class work and assignment work;
- valuable service in a particular area of the school and
- citizenship.

There are several different levels of recognition:

<b>What</b>	<b>When</b>
Classroom Systems: Class based rewards Certificates Stickers and prizes Class Dojo for tracking achievement	Ongoing
Assembly Awards are given at: K-6 Assemblies Awards include: Birthdays K-6 (Newsletter) Merit Awards ( 4 per fortnight) Habits of Mind Merit  Principal's Award	Fortnightly  K-6 Assembly
Special Assemblies Badge Assembly School Leaders and Sports Captains K-6 Presentation Day Academic awards Sporting awards	Early Term 1, Term 2-3-4  Late Term 4

# Assemblies

The students celebrate their achievements at a range of assemblies that occur throughout the year.

## K to 6 Assemblies

Whole school assemblies are held every second Tuesday afternoon between 2- 2.30 pm. They celebrate the successes and achievements of students K to 6. At the assembly various certificates and awards are handed out. School Leaders and Sports Captains have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills by leading the assembly each fortnight. Parents and carers are most welcome to attend this assembly.

## Special Assemblies

The students also celebrate their achievements at special assemblies that occur throughout the year as described below:

### Badge Assembly

Students who will be undertaking leadership roles in the school are inducted into their positions and presented with badges to identify their role. Parents are welcome to attend these ceremonies to celebrate with us.

The positions being inducted include:

- School Leaders and Sport Captains

### K-6 Presentation Day

Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 celebrate their achievements with the community. It is held at school and all parents and carers are invited to attend.

## Class Dojos

This is an awards program to acknowledge those students who have:

- nice manners,
- great work;
- homework;
- good playground behaviour;
- respect; or
- friendship.

Teachers give out Dojos in class to acknowledge manners, great work, friendship, RESPECT and other qualities valued by the school community.

**R**esponsibility

**E**mpathy

**S**triving

**P**ersisting

**E**xploring

**C**reating

**T**eamwork

All students and teachers are able to track progress using the online program.

A class tracking system will ensure that all records are monitored at the following levels:

- within the classroom for individual students;

Presentation of certificates will occur as follows:

- awards are given out at K-6 assemblies.

## **Student Leadership Programs**

### **School Leaders**

Students in Year 6 are elected each term to lead and represent the school.

### **Sports Captains**

Students in Year 6 are elected each term to coordinate sports events and maintain the sports shed.

### **Other Support Programs include:**

#### **Child Protection**

Child Protection lessons are conducted across the school following NSW Department of Education and Training curriculum guidelines. Students participate in these lessons once a week for approximately 10 weeks. The lesson content is based on the student's age and covers the areas of Recognising Abuse, Power in Relationships and Protective Strategies.

#### **Drug Education**

Part of the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) K-6 syllabus is Drug Education. The lessons are part of the Personal Health Choices strand of the syllabus. The classroom teacher will teach this as part of the normal PDHPE lessons each year.

#### **Interrelate**

Every second year Interrelate conduct a family based evening education program for interested parents and their children. This program is conducted over two sessions. Parents can bring their children to either one or both of the sessions. The two sessions are 'Where do I come From' and 'Preparing for Puberty'. These sessions are designed for students in Years 3 to 6.

## **Special Student Programs**

Each year a range of programs are undertaken in classrooms aimed at improving social relationships and reducing poor and inappropriate behaviour. These programs are as follows:

### **Anti-Bullying Programs**

Our Anti-Bullying Policy was revised in Term 3 2012, following departmental guidelines. As a school community we do not accept bullying, in any form. Clear procedures have been built into our Fair Discipline Code to both monitor and actively support both perpetrators and victims.

### **Buddies**

A buddy system is an important part of our school's personal development program. The basis of the system is that younger children will be able to identify with a buddy in an older class. This provides security to younger children and responsibility to older leaders of our school. These are usually K/6.



Activities include:

- buddy reading, computer, writing, speaking and listening;
- helping in art/craft, dance and physical education groups;
- class visits to view completed work; and
- sharing special days eg: picnics, walks, fairs.

### **Personalised Learning Plan for Aboriginal Students**

The Australian Government is committed to Closing the Gap between the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students. To improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students it is important that teachers, families and students work together to identify and support the individual needs of students.

Teachers implement Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) that include targets negotiated against key learning outcomes. This is done in consultation with students and parents.

We have no Aboriginal students at Otford Public School at this time.

## **The Discipline System**

### **Purpose and Rationale**

Otford Public School is committed to, and believes that, a safe and secure environment is essential so that all students can learn, to the best of their ability. Student behaviour impacts on student achievement. We are committed, as a school, to model respect for all people and provide instructional; opportunities to assist children as they learn to live in a diverse society.

### **The DEC Core Rules include:**

All students in NSW are expected to:

- attend every school day, unless they are legally excused, and be in class on time and be prepared to learn;
- maintain a neat appearance, including adhering to the requirements of the school's uniform and 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 another with dignity and respect;
- care for property belonging to themselves, the school and others.

Behaviour that infringes on the safety of others, such as harassment, bullying and illegal or anti-social behaviour of any kind, will not be tolerated.

### **Our school implements:**

- Strategies to promote positive student behaviour, including specific strategies to maintain a climate of R E S P E C T.
- Strategies and practices to recognise and reinforce student achievement.
- Strategies and practices to manage inappropriate behaviour.

### **For the Students**

This system means that you have to make decisions about your behaviour. The student who displays behaviour (both social and academic) deserves commendation and will be recognised through the merit systems. The misbehaving student can decide to make some positive change or to accept the consequences described under our discipline system.

## **For the Parents**

This policy document should provide information that will assist you in discussing your child's behaviour, to congratulate them and also to provide necessary guidance, support and encouragement when needed.

## **For School Staff**

This policy document will provide a consistent approach when dealing with positive and negative behaviour in the school situation.

All staff and students have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity to achieve their personal best. When parents enrol their children at Otford Public School they enter into a partnership with our school. This partnership is based on a shared commitment to provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for their actions and to have a greater say in the nature and content of their learning. Collaboration between school staff, students and parents and carers is an important feature of our discipline policy.

All disciplinary actions involving suspension and expulsion from school are managed consistently with the *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students- Procedures*.

# **Rights and Responsibilities**

**Teachers, parents and students need to work co-operatively together to achieve a positive school environment.**

## **Student Rights:**

Students have the right to:

- be cared for, and treated equally as individuals by the whole school community;
- be free of violence, harassment and bullying;
- work in a safe and peaceful environment with clearly structured and appropriate routines;
- be presented with learning activities, which meet their needs and encourage them to maximise their potential and
- have the opportunity to be involved in making decisions within the school.

## **Student Responsibilities:**

Students have a responsibility to:

- obey the school discipline code and accept school discipline;
- be prepared for all lessons and complete all required work to the best of their ability;
- show respect for themselves and the rights of others;
- encourage others to do their best;
- respect and care for school buildings, school property and the property of others;
- observe the general dress standards and uniform requirements of the school;
- participate constructively as members of the school community;
- work towards problem solving without violence, intimidation, harassment or bullying;
- allow others to learn without interference;
- be tolerant of differences in others and
- play and behave in a safe manner at all times.

### **School Responsibilities:**

The school will recognise and reinforce appropriate behaviour and achievement through a range of strategies. This may include:

- encouragement and praise;
- modelling of consistent and caring behaviour by staff;
- communicating student achievement to families and community through commendation at assemblies, school newsletter and the promotion of public performances and displays of work through media;
- the school Merit Award Scheme and Levels System promoting special activities and excursions for appropriate behaviour;
- implementing the 'Stop, Think, Do' Program through explicit teaching in all classrooms K-6;
- short student role plays at school assemblies demonstrating appropriate behaviours and
- improved playground resources and usage.

### **Family Responsibilities:**

Parents and carers will work in partnership with the school to recognise and reinforce appropriate behaviour and student achievement through:

- encouragement and praise;
- ensuring students have necessary equipment to participate in daily lessons;
- regular discussion of student concerns through parent-teacher meetings and interviews;
- attending formal assemblies, performances, sporting events and other school celebrations;
- making use of school programs to support staff, parents and students and
- providing and encouraging a positive environment for home study.

## **School Rules**

### **Fair Discipline Code**

The process for documenting and dealing with incidents that occur on the playground is listed below:

#### **Minor Incident**

If an incident is minor in nature then the teacher on playground duty tells Principal for recording purposes.

#### **Major Incident**

If an incident is major (that is, it is a major infringement of school rules, and/or is very violent, and/or is putting the safety of others at risk, and/ or failure to follow teacher directions) then the students involved in the incident are immediately referred to the Principal.

*A student will be placed on an appropriate level in accordance with the school's **Fair Discipline Code**.*

Why you have been placed on this level	What happens to you at this level
<p><b><u>Level 0</u></b></p> <p>All children commence at this level. You are co-operative and obey rules.</p>	<p>Class and school awards are given to you.</p>
<p><b><u>Verbal Warning</u></b></p> <p>Minor problems in the classroom or playground.</p>	<p>Teacher deals with problems at class or playground level. You may have to walk with the teacher or sit in an area for a period of time..</p> <p>3 cross system followed in the classroom.</p>
<p><b><u>Level 1</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Warning Level</u></b></p> <p>Repeated disruption in class. Unacceptable behaviour in the playground. <u>Inappropriate behaviours:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continued disruption to games or playground harmony.</li> <li>• out of bounds.</li> <li>• repeated disruption to classroom learning.</li> <li>• continual climbing trees.</li> <li>• playing on equipment unsupervised.</li> <li>• continual playing in toilets.</li> <li>• disruptive assembly behaviour.</li> <li>• minor acts of violence-first offence. (tripping, pushing, throwing objects, unintentional dangerous play)</li> <li>• failure to arrive at <i>reflection</i> without a valid reason or misbehaviour whilst in reflection.</li> </ul>	<p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an interview with the <i>Principal</i></li> <li>• have a <b><u>warning letter</u></b> sent home to your parents. This will be signed by your parents and returned to the Principal&gt; Have an interview with your teacher to help solve the problem.</li> <li>• stay at Level 1 for 5 days and your teacher will monitor your behaviour.</li> </ul>

Why you have been placed on this level	What happens to you at this level
<p><b><u>Level 2</u></b></p> <p>Continued unacceptable behaviour as outlined in Level 1. <u>Inappropriate behaviours:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continued disrespect as outlined in Level 1.</li> <li>• swearing or bad language (direct or indirect)</li> <li>• rude gestures.</li> <li>• stealing.</li> <li>• damage to school or another student's property.</li> <li>• open defiance towards a teacher.</li> <li>• rough and dangerous play.</li> <li>• bullying, harassment or teasing.</li> <li>• leaving the school grounds without permission or playing in a dangerous area.</li> <li>• scripture/non-scripture misbehaviour.</li> <li>• sport / excursion misbehaviour.</li> </ul>	<p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an interview with the Principal.</li> <li>• have 3 days second half lunch on the steps or silver seats.</li> <li>• <b><u>receive a letter</u></b> informing your parents.</li> <li>• remain at this level for at least 5 school days. This will be reviewed by your teacher to determine whether you stay on Level 2 for 1 more week.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Level 3</u></b></p> <p>Continued unacceptable behaviour as outlined in Level 2.</p>	<p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an interview with the Principal.</li> <li>• have 5 days second half lunch on the steps or silver seats.</li> <li>• <b><u>receive a letter</u></b> informing your parents.</li> <li>• remain at this level for at least 5 school days. This will be reviewed by your teacher to determine whether you stay on Level 3 for 1 more week.</li> </ul>
<p>You <u>may</u> be excluded while on this level for 10 DAYS from;</p> <p><b><u>School and class excursions.</u></b> <b><u>School and class social activities.</u></b> <b><u>School representative sports events.</u></b></p> <p>This will be at the Principals' discretion.</p>	

<p><b><u>Level 4 - Suspension Warning</u></b></p> <p>Continued unacceptable behaviour as outlined in Level 3.  <u>Inappropriate behaviours:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated or persistent bullying.</li> <li>serious threatening of another student.</li> <li>aggressive behaviour towards others including any form of hitting, kicking or intentional physical contact.</li> <li>swearing at a teacher- direct verbal assault.</li> <li>smoking on school grounds.</li> <li>throwing an implement / weapon at other students with the intent of injury.</li> <li>spitting at someone.</li> </ul> <p>You <u>will</u> be excluded while on this level for 10 DAYS from:</p> <p><b><u>School and class excursions.</u></b>  <b><u>School and class social activities.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>School representative sports events</u></b></p>	<p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have an interview with the Principal.</li> <li>have 5 days second half lunch on the steps or silver seats.</li> <li><b><u>receive a letter</u></b> informing your parents. Your parents will be invited to come to the school and talk with class teacher or Principal.</li> <li>Develop an <i>Individual Behaviour Program</i>.</li> <li>remain at this level for at least 5 school days. This will be reviewed by your teacher to determine whether you stay on Level 4 for 1 more week.</li> </ul> <p>You may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at the discretion of the Principal, be withdrawn from the classroom.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Level 5 – Suspension</u></b></p> <p>The Principal reserves the right to suspend a student for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>obscene language towards a teacher-direct verbal assault.</li> <li>unprovoked or repeated physical or verbal assault – violent behaviour.</li> <li>continued deterioration of behaviour.</li> <li>carrying drugs or weapons of any kind.</li> <li>school vandalism.</li> <li>repeated disobedience.</li> </ul>	<p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have an interview with the Principal with counselling strategies.</li> <li><b><u>receive a letter</u></b> or phone call informing your parents of impending suspension.</li> <li>Interview with parents.</li> <li>return from suspension on level O and may be placed on an <u>Individual Behaviour Program</u>.</li> </ul> <p>You may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>short suspensions – up to 4 days.</li> <li>long suspensions – up to 20 days.</li> <li>to return to school on a partial attendance.</li> </ul>

## Classroom Behaviour Management Strategies

### **Individual Classroom Discipline System**

If a classroom incident is major (that is, it is a major infringement of school rules, and/or is very violent, and/or is putting the safety of others at risk, and/ or failure to follow teacher directions) then the students involved in the incident are immediately referred to the Principal. If an incident is minor in nature then the classroom teacher will follow his/her normal individual classroom discipline system.

### **Classroom Monitoring Sheets**

Students who display continued poor classroom behaviour may be placed on an Individual Classroom Monitoring Sheet. They may also be referred to the Student Welfare Committee.

### **Targeted Program**

An individual program may be devised to address the behaviour of the student and to assist them to use positive strategies at all times.

### **Classroom Monitoring Booklet**

At times teachers may decide to implement a special booklet to monitor behaviour of children who are having difficulties. Details of classroom discipline are noted onto a Classroom Monitoring Booklet for the student. Parents may be asked to assist to monitor their child's behaviour and provide feedback to the school about improvements or concerns.