

The Avenue School

Policy & Procedure Document

Policy number	4.17	Version	1.0
Drafted by	J. Claringbold	Approved by Board on	25/06/2024
Responsible person	Principal	Scheduled review date	25/06/2027
Policy Area	Student Welfare		

Title: Student Behaviour Management

As a registered school in Victoria, The Avenue School must comply with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Guidelines on the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration and the requirements of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic) (collectively referred to as the ETR Requirements).

All policies relating to student behaviour management, including this policy and its provisions relating to suspension and expulsion, are communicated to parents, guardians, students and the school community via The Avenue School handbook and website.

The Avenue School is dedicated to a safe learning environment and ensuring appropriate behaviour management of students and prohibits any form of corporal punishment.

The Avenue School avoids using a punitive approach when students with anxiety disorders are experiencing difficulties with attendance. Positive reinforcement and encouragement in combination with setting agreed goals and boundaries is likely to achieve the best results.

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Provide a framework for student behaviour management.
2. Provide students, staff and parents/guardians with clarity as to behaviour expectation of students at The Avenue School and the consequences when those expectations are breached.
3. Ensure a process that affords procedural fairness by:
 - a) Communicating to students the Student Code of Conduct and standards of acceptable conduct.
 - b) Including students in decisions affecting them and providing them with an opportunity to be heard before a decision is made.
 - c) Have decisions determined by a reasonable and unbiased person.
 - d) Explaining reasons for decisions and that students have the right for decisions to be reviewed.

Responsibilities

1. The Board will monitor the effectiveness of this Policy.
2. The Principal is responsible for communicating this Policy to support its implementation and following the requirements of this Policy when making disciplinary decisions.
3. All staff have a responsibility to read and understand this policy, act in accordance with Policy requirements, and undertake any professional development opportunities for managing student behaviour.

Child Safe Standards

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The Avenue School has no tolerance for child abuse and will adhere to the Child Safe Standards contained in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) and will ensure child safety and wellbeing is embedded in school leadership, governance and culture, and will ensure the school complies with all requirements of Ministerial Order 1359.

The Avenue School will:

1. Create a safe, caring environment in which students are nurtured as they learn.
2. Aim to meet the personal, social and learning needs of students, in all planning and curriculum delivery.
3. Enable students' safe access and success through a comprehensive curriculum
4. Incorporate preventative health, wellbeing and social skills programs.
5. Stress the value and importance of collaborative early intervention when problems and challenges are identified.
6. Provide ongoing educational services to support students.
7. Recognise diversity within the community and provide programs and support which acknowledge differences and promote harmony.
8. Incorporate effective classroom management strategies as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
9. Recognise the role that the school plays as a resource to link students and families with community support services.
10. Provide opportunities for students to:
 - a) Enjoy success and recognition in a safe and harassment free environment
 - b) Make a useful contribution to the community
 - c) Derive enjoyment from their learning.

The Avenue School will provide effective learning, teaching, supervision and support for students within a well-managed school in partnership with parents/guardians and the wider community.

During the enrolment interview with the student and parent/guardian, the enrolment agreement will be introduced, which informs behaviour expectations. Parents/guardians will be informed of outcomes, should students demonstrate behaviour inconsistent with the enrolment agreement and Student Code of Conduct required.

The objectives and outcomes that follow therefore relate to:

1. Effective Learning and Teaching.
2. Behaviour Management.
3. Suspensions and Expulsions.
4. Monitoring Student Attendance.
5. The Avenue School Responsibilities.

1. Effective Learning and Teaching

The Avenue School's objective is to:

- a) Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.
- b) Identify, assess and accommodate the individual learning needs and styles of students.
- c) Accommodate student needs for additional support and allow time for anxiety management strategies to take effect. Allow students with anxiety disorders or mental health concerns to guide the process of re-engagement with school.
- d) Establish well managed and supportive teaching and learning environments.
- e) Ensure that learning and assessment activities build on prior knowledge and experiences and are socially and culturally relevant.

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- f) Provide frequent opportunities for students and their parents to discuss learning programs, student behaviour and academic and personal progress.
- g) Provide opportunities for students to develop both key social and life skills through the curriculum and learning activities.

2. Behaviour Management

The Avenue School’s objective is to ensure all students read, understand and sign the Student Code of Conduct during the enrolment process.

The Avenue School will:

- a) Encourage student participation in decision making by seeking their input and feedback.
- b) Establish fair and clear guidelines that are agreed to and understood by all staff and students. Guidelines directly relate to the Student Code of Conduct which outlines expectations for participation and appropriate behaviour.
- c) Identify inappropriate behaviour and manage it through restorative and reflective practices, conflict resolution, communication and negotiation skills.
- d) If a student breaches the signed enrolment agreement or the Student Code of Conduct, follow-up meetings will be arranged by the youth worker. These meetings may be in conjunction with relevant personnel such as:
 - Principal
 - Youth worker
 - Teachers
 - Education support staff
 - Parents/ guardians
 - Outside of school support personnel
- e) At the meeting, the nature of the breach and The Avenue School’s decision regarding discipline for that breach is explained to the student, the reasons for any decision will be given, and the student will be given an opportunity to respond.
- f) At the discretion of The Avenue School, a student who breaches the agreement may be placed on a transition plan. The plan will outline specific behaviour expectations, directly related to the inappropriate or unsafe behaviour that led to the plan being created. The transition plan uses a restorative approach giving the student the opportunity to make better choices, learn from their mistakes, whilst being supported by staff.
- g) The Avenue School may consider it inappropriate to place a student on a transition plan when misbehaviour is of a serious nature. For example, it may not be appropriate to place a student on a transition plan when a student has been repeatedly racist.
- h) If a student is to be placed on a transition plan, a meeting will be arranged between the principal, youth worker and the student. An adult representative will be required when the student is under 18 years of age. The nominated adult could be a support worker, parent or guardian. During this meeting, the conditions of the transition plan are very carefully explained to the students and their representatives. The principal and youth worker will discuss strategies with the student to support their commitment to the transition plan.

3. Suspensions and Expulsions.

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- a) It is possible that a breach of a transition plan or repeated breaches of a transition plan may constitute grounds for suspension or termination of enrolment, in which case clauses within suspensions and expulsions below apply. In all other cases, where a student breaches a transition plan, a meeting will be held with the student and the principal or team leader, wellbeing staff, pathways and transitions coordinator and an adult representative where the student is under 18 years of age. A range of relevant options and pathways will be discussed at this meeting.
- b) Teachers may not use physical restraint or seclusion techniques unless immediately required to protect the safety of the student, other students or any other person. If this level of action is required, teachers and staff should seek immediate assistance to help de-escalate the situation and protect other students. Refer to Restrictive Practices Policy
- c) The procedure for appeal against any of the above actions is outlined in the student handbook and the Complaints Handling policy and procedure.

Behaviour management strategies are warranted when a student's behaviour becomes significant enough to disrupt the teacher's ability to teach and classmates' ability to learn, participate and feel safe.

Disruptive and unacceptable behaviours may include:

- a) Incidences of Bullying; including cyber bullying.
- b) Any form of racism, including racial hatred and taunts.
- c) Constant disruptions or attention seeking behaviour.
- d) Rude or disrespectful behaviour or attitudes.
- e) Consistent refusal to participate in class work or activities.
- f) Displays of violence or intimidation.
- g) Damage to equipment, furnishings or facilities.
- h) Failure to follow reasonable, clear instructions of a staff member.

Suspension

When suspension or expulsion is being considered, an investigation to ensure procedural fairness and transparent decision-making is required. A decision to suspend or expel is not a pre-determined outcome.

The following actions support procedural fairness in a suspension or expulsion decision:

- a) Establish the details of the student's behaviour.
- b) Consider the impact on all affected parties.
- c) Document the investigation.
- d) Communicate with the student and parent/guardian.
- e) Consider any new interventions or supports that can be trialed having regard to the student's individual, circumstances or behaviour.
- f) Consider if behavior meets grounds for expulsion of the student.
- g) Notify the student and their parent/guardian that expulsion is being considered.
- h) Provide an opportunity for the student and their parent/guardian to respond.

In determining whether to suspend or expel student, the Principal will consider the facts and have regard to the following relevant factors including:

- a) The seriousness of the behaviour for which expulsion is being considered and history of such behaviour.
- b) The educational needs of the student.
- c) The potential that the behaviour is due to unmanaged anxiety or other mental health concerns.
- d) Any disability or additional learning need of the student.

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- e) The age of the student.
- f) The residential and social circumstances of the student.
- g) Previous interventions and supports.
- h) Level of vulnerability of the student.
- i) The student’s level of remorse, if relevant.
- j) The safety of all students, staff and visitors. Grounds for suspension from school include:
 - Bullying; including cyber bullying and any form of racism.
 - The use or distribution of any alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, moth balls, aerosols, vaping materials or other substances which might be lawful (for example, they have been prescribed to the student) but nevertheless are intended to be used for illicit purposes, deliberate misuse or intoxication.
 - Behaving in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person.
 - Causing significant damage to or destruction of property.
 - Committing or attempting to commit or knowingly being involved in the theft of property.
 - Possessing, using, selling or deliberately assisting another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons.
 - Possessing (including on social media accounts) material which is illegal, explicit, violent, inciteful of hate or violence, racist, misogynistic, homophobic or otherwise offensive.
 - Failing to comply with any clear, lawful and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person.
 - Consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person.
 - Consistently behaving in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.
 - Breaching a transition plan either significantly or repeatedly.

Instances of suspension must be approved by the Principal in consultation with teaching staff and the youth worker. The parent/guardian will be contacted to attend a mandatory meeting between the Principal, youth worker and student. At the meeting, measures to ensure procedural fairness will be applied. The nature of the breach and the school’s decision regarding suspension for that breach will be explained to the student, the reasons for any decision will be given, and the student will be given an opportunity to respond.

Suspension may also be relied on as an interim disciplinary measure where expulsion is being considered.

Expulsion

Instant expulsion from The Avenue School could occur for serious acts including willful misconduct. Serious acts include theft, physical or sexual assault, attendance under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and any of the grounds for suspension, where the behaviour is particularly egregious, involves violence, racism, or racial hatred and taunts, is repeated, is dangerous or is offensive. Highlighting these examples does not diminish or exclude other instances.

A student may be expelled when they are on suspension and/or a transition plan and further instances of unacceptable behaviour occur. The parent/guardian will be contacted to attend a mandatory meeting between the Principal, a member of the wellbeing team and the student. At the meeting, to afford the student procedural fairness, the nature of the breach and The Avenue School’s decision and reasons for proposing expulsion for that breach will be explained to the student, and the student will be given an opportunity to respond.

The following measures apply to decisions to expel:

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1. Only a principal has the authority to expel a student from the school of which they are the principal.
2. A principal may not delegate their power to expel a student
3. The principal is responsible for contacting and advising a parent/guardian.
4. The complaints handling procedure is to be followed where there is any grievance by a student or parent regarding any discipline, including suspension and/or expulsion.

Register of Suspensions and Expulsions

The principal is responsible for recording all relevant information pertaining to student behaviour and outcomes, ensuring a register of suspensions and expulsions is maintained. Meeting outcomes must be recorded on the register as well as on the student's wellbeing file maintained by the wellbeing team and stored securely and privately on the Student Management System.

4. The Avenue School Responsibilities

1. A commitment to student wellbeing underpins all the policies, procedures and activities of the school.
2. Provide fair and reasonable opportunities to students and encourage students to make positive choices.
3. Student wellbeing policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.
4. Students are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
5. Student wellbeing is monitored regularly and embedded into teaching and classes.
6. Behaviour management policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.
7. All policies, procedures and practices are regularly reviewed to ensure that they meet the needs of all students enrolled at the school.
8. Staff and students work together to develop strategies for addressing student welfare and behaviour management needs within the school.
9. All teaching and support staff are familiar with the Behaviour Management policy and procedure. A copy will be issued to all staff during their staff induction.
10. All students, parents/guardians are familiar with this procedure, details are outlined in the Enrolment Agreement and Student Handbook.
11. School personnel contribute to the provision of a caring, well managed, safe and harassment free environment for all students, staff, parents and guardians.