Gardenvale Primary School

Student Engagement &
WellBeing Policy

To be read in conjunction with
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines

August 2015

Principal: Chris Chant
School Council President: John Antonio
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SECTION 1: SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

Built in the Early 1900’s, Gardenvale Primary School is situated in the bayside suburb of East Brighton. It is situated in a middle class residential suburb and enjoys a split-site environment, with a Prep - 2 Junior Campus located at 44 Landcox Street, while Years 3 - 6 are situated on the Senior Campus at 66 Landcox Street. Gardenvale Primary School provides a sequential comprehensive curriculum from Preparatory Year to Year Six, in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, including classes conducted by specialists in the Performing Arts, Visual Arts, ICT, PE & Health and Japanese. In addition, special programs are developed to address and reflect students’ needs, including Reading Recovery, Literacy Support, Perceptual Motor Program, Integration and a wide variety of enrichment and support programs.

The school has consistently remained at enrolment capacity across both Campuses. There is a strong demand for enrolment from families outside the school’s zone, so it is necessary to adhere to the school’s enrolment boundary to ensure that there are not large class sizes at all year levels. The school has proved itself to be a school of choice within the local community based on its strong educational values, student academic achievement and its outstanding sporting, visual and performing arts programs.

Gardenvale Primary School has equal gender representation. Approximately 15% of the students come from families that have English as a second language. The main religious backgrounds of the students are Christian and Jewish. We have no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students and less than 5% of families receive EMA payments.

Gardenvale Primary School is committed to the academic and personal growth of every student. A focussed curriculum, dedication to innovation and a culture of care, help us meet this commitment. A balanced and comprehensive curriculum constantly challenges students to extend their learning. Gardenvale Primary School has a strong partnership with its community, based upon shared expectations on curriculum, student conduct and professionalism. We share the common bond of hard work and commitment to educational improvement for the benefit of all our students. In curriculum and welfare issues, our school encourages open communication and co-operative involvement between students, parents and staff, and we enjoy strong parent participation in all aspects of the school’s programs. Parents are widely represented on the Parents’ Association, School Council and all its project teams and evidence of their willingness to be involved is provided by the level of commitment in formal training programs, excursions, fund-raising, special events, information and curriculum evenings, decision-making processes, classroom and outdoor education programs.

Student Well-Being is our highest priority. We aim to instil the sound values, develop self esteem and ensure the safety of our students. We challenge students to be the very best they can be. Our role is to help every student realise their potential and empower and motivate them to become good citizen in the community.

A well established Student-Wellbeing Program reflects current practice in developing qualities and life skills such as responsibility, communication, independence, self esteem, confidence, co-operation, inquiring minds, problem solving and creativity. Our experienced staff forms a dedicated, co-operative and caring team, which ensures that students are valued as individuals as well as team members. The teaching staff continue to actively participate in a wide range of Professional Development activities and as an essential element of Whole School Planning, meet weekly to co-operatively develop planning units and common assessment tasks. Our staff is proactive, seeking opportunities to innovate and respond enthusiastically to the emerging needs of our students in the 21st Century. Our school values effective communication between teachers and parents, as this genuine partnership ensures the achievement of enhanced outcomes for our students.

At Gardenvale Primary School, our goal as an effective learning community is the achievement of excellence and the fulfilment of potential, in a happy, caring and safe environment. We celebrate our cultural diversity and we strive to actively engage our students in a wide variety of meaningful learning experiences. We offer a challenging learning experience in core curriculum and a wide range of enrichment programs. Through the delivery of a balanced, broad curriculum and systematic approach to teaching and learning, the learning needs of individual students to realise their potential are met in a supportive and co-operative learning environment.

Gardenvale Primary School sees parents as vital partners in the educational process and encourages their participation in all aspects of the students’ education.
SECTION 2: WHOLE-SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT
Gardenvale Primary School promotes an environment in which all members of the school community feel valued, safe and supported; are encouraged to actively participate and contribute to all aspects of the school and are given every opportunity to meet their personal and educational potential. Gardenvale Primary School’s Student Well-Being program is directed towards the physical, intellectual, emotional and social well-being of the individual. The emotional and physical wellbeing of our students is pivotal to their success at school, as adolescents, and in their future lives. Physically and emotionally healthy students are happy, able to deal positively with life’s challenges, experience a sense of connectedness with the school and others, and are well placed to develop into well-balanced and successful young adults. The various Student Well-Being programs implemented across all levels of the school, ensures a positive and supportive approach to all aspects of student well-being and a consistent approach to disciplinary issues.

Our positive school culture is also predicated on student engagement being the basis of learning. To support this, the school leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse learning needs. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff and students is promoted through professional learning teams that encourage innovative pedagogy.

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Attendance
Gardenvale Primary School recognises that full attendance is a key to engagement and maximises every students’ ability to learn and our teachers’ ability to teach effectively. The school ‘Student Attendance’ policy ensures a consistent approach and the monitoring of all student attendance.

Student Well-Being Team
The Student Well-Being Team meets regularly and is represented by staff from each Year Level. It organises services for students with needs or concerns relating to emotional, academic and behavioural well-being. The team also manages and initiates school programs to enhance Student Well-Being. These include:

Classroom Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Creating Our Learning Environment – developing a sense of community across the school – 4 week program for all year levels.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Year 1 ~ Anti-Bullying Program Year 4 and 6 ~ Family Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Years 3 ~ Anti-Bullying Programs Year 5 ~ Project Rocket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Prep ~ Team Building Year 2 ~ Team Building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classroom rules
Students should:
- Show respect to others
- Talk at appropriate times
- Treat others as they would wish to be treated
- Respect school property and the property of others
- Speak to teachers and other students politely
- Ask permission to leave the classroom
- Display a positive attitude
Manners Program
We believe the students at Gardenvale are well-mannered and we would like this to always be the case. As a way of reminding and reinforcing the use of manners each year we conduct a whole school program where for a Manner is introduced each month. The Manners Program include the following topics:
Greetings – eg. Using names, looking at people in the eye
Manners at School – eg. Entering another classroom, two people entering a room at the same time
Eating Habits – eg. Eating in the one spot – not walking around! Not speaking with your mouth full!
Talking and Listening – eg. When to talk and when to listen, mumbling, shouting and interrupting – waiting your turn
Property – eg. Taking care of property borrowed, putting things back where they belong!

Student Awards
Every week students are selected to receive awards, which are presented at weekly assemblies. Students from each campus are nominated by staff to receive the ‘Student of the Week’ Award. The names of these students are published in the School’s Newsletter. Additional awards are also presented to worthy recipients.

House Points
A ‘House Point’ System operates on both campuses. All students belong to a house, those being Milroy, Thomas, Hosking and Landcox. Students receive house points for a variety of reasons and a tally is kept in each classroom. Each Monday the winning house for the previous week is announced and a presentation is made.

Restorative Practice.
Gardenvale Primary School has introduced Restorative Practices to encourage engagement, and build pride, respect and responsibility in each individual student.

A restorative question approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When things go wrong</th>
<th>When someone has been hurt</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened?</td>
<td>What did you think when you realized what had happened?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were you thinking at the time?</td>
<td>What impact has this incident had on you and others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What have you thought about since?</td>
<td>What has been the hardest thing for you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who has been affected by what you have done?</td>
<td>What do you think needs to happen to make things right?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what way?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think you need to do to make things right?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Transition
Students commencing at Gardenvale Primary School and commencing secondary school are required to cope with a very different environment. It is our school’s responsibility to make this transition as enjoyable and trouble free as possible. Through information evenings, orientation days, and forming close links to kindergartens and secondary schools, we ensure a smooth transition educationally, socially and emotionally for all students who are commencing school for the first time, moving to the Senior Campus from the Junior Campus, graduating to secondary colleges from Year 6 and transferring to Gardenvale from other schools.
SECTION 3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 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.

3.2 Equal Opportunity
The Equal Opportunity Act 1995 sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality 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).

3.3 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 DET 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 school’s monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance website.
3.4 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 (DDA). 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 a 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
- costs resulting from the student’s participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student’s participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

3.5 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 when one or more people are exposed regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

Cyberbullying 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)

Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:

- teasing and being made fun of
- spreading of rumours online
- sending unwanted messages
- defamation.

Cyberbullying 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.
The effects of harassment or bullying include
- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

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

**Subtle: (The most common)**
They 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: (obvious)**
They 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.
- Requests for sexual favours.

**Bullying can involve such things as**
- 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

**Cyberbullying**
Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:
- the language they use and the things they say
- how they treat others
- respecting people’s property (e.g. copyright)
- visiting appropriate places.
- Behaving safely online means:
  - protecting their own privacy and personal information (we used to call it ‘stranger danger’)
  - 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.

**Rights and Responsibilities of our School Community**
A feature of Gardenvale Primary School is the high standard of student behaviour, largely an outcome of a consistent and pro-active approach to student well-being, linked to clear expectations and consequences.

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.
If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell an adult or the person that they witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

If a student is being harassed or bullied they should:
- Tell the person they don’t like what they are doing and that they want them to stop or
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that they feel comfortable with.

All Student concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

**Rights and Responsibilities of Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students have a right to: 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 participate fully in the school’s educational program</td>
<td>Students have a responsibility to: -participate fully in the school’s educational program and to attend regularly. -display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. -demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn. -contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

**Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers**

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<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Parents/carers have a responsibility to: -promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress and by modeling positive behaviours. -ensure their child’s regular attendance -engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning. -support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.</td>
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**Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers**

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<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers have a right to: -expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment -be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student</td>
<td>Teachers have a responsibility to -fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. -know how students learn and how to teach them effectively. -know the content they teach. -know their students. -plan and assess for effective learning. -create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. -use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.</td>
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**SECTION 4: SHARED EXPECTATIONS**

Gardenvale Primary School has high expectations for the whole school community.
Shared expectations are:

- All students have a right to be safe
- Teachers and support staff should expect to be able to teach and assist students in an atmosphere of order and co-operation
- Students have a right to equality of opportunity and ongoing support
- Students can expect to have every chance to learn and play, without being disrupted, harassed and bullied or interfered with by other students
- Students are expected to participate, work consistently and to the best of their ability
- Pride in our school is encouraged and expected
- Everyone in our school community, including visitors are valued and treated thoughtfully, courteously and politely
- Everyone is expected to look after and respect:
  - their own and other people’s property
  - school equipment and materials
  - the school buildings and grounds
- Parents are expected to be aware of the Code of Conduct and positively support its implementation
- Principal and staff have an obligation to implement the Code of Conduct fairly, responsibly and consistently
- All students will wear school uniform as per the Uniform Policy
- Students will adhere to Sun Smart guidelines

Schools – Principals, Teachers and 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.

Diversity in the school community

Gardenvale Primary School celebrates diversity throughout its school community and 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
- attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- continuously increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the great diversity of perspectives and inputs
- creating effective work teams due to high participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.
SECTION 5: SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support. The school’s actions and consequences are framed in a positive way to encourage students to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience.

Our oath underpins the values of our school and is as follows:
*
**Every student has the right to learn, without the disruption from others.**

**Show respect to others**

**Talk at appropriate times**

*Work as well as you can and allow others to do the same*

**Students should be mindful of the Safety and Well-Being of themselves and others.**

**Treat others as you wish to be treated**

**Respect school property and the property of others**

**Be aware of the safety of yourself and others**

**Resolve problems calmly, sensibly and fairly**

*Students and teachers should be courteous towards one another.*

**Respect others through your speech and manners**

**Ask permission to leave the classroom**

**Display a positive attitude**

At Gardenvale Primary School, student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours are supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- Giving positive reinforcement and praise
- Acknowledging students’ achievements
- Improving self esteem
- Fostering pride towards our school
- Establishing a caring and supportive environment
- Expecting students to take responsibility for their own actions
- Providing social skills strategies to students
- Encouraging parent/teacher partnership
- Working as a team
- Providing adequate supervision in the school yard
- Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:
  - 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.
- Broader support strategies will include:
  - involving and supporting the parents/carers,
  - involving the Student Wellbeing Manager,
  - mentoring and/or counselling
  - convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
  - developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
  - providing broader educational programs, for example invists/excursions, camps/outdoor education involving community support agencies.
STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AT GARDENVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE CLASSROOM

Consequences for not following classroom rules are as follows:

If a student breaks classroom rules the following procedure is to be followed.

**First Warning** – Student’s name is written on the board.

**Second Warning** – A cross is recorded against student’s name. Student is isolated within the classroom.

**Third Warning** – Second cross against student’s name. Student is detained in classroom for 5 minutes at the commencement of the next appropriate break to discuss their behaviour.

**Fourth Warning** – Third cross against student’s name. A lunchtime 30 minute detention is given. A letter is sent home informing parents of their child’s behaviour.

After 3 lunchtime detentions the student’s parents are requested to attend a meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal or Class Teacher.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- Teachers record inappropriate behaviour in the schoolyard on to the slips of paper housed in yard duty bags.
- A record will be kept of behaviour misdemeanours on class lists by a member of the Student Well-Being Team after one incident.
- After a student has broken school rules on two occasions, parents are notified by a member of the Student Wellbeing Team and the student will receive a lunchtime detention.
- If the behaviour continues the student will be removed from the yard for a given period of time.
- After numerous or a serious offence/s the student will attend an after school detention. Parents will receive a letter and will be asked to attend a meeting at School with Principal or Assistant Principal.
- All serious behaviour problems are to be reported to the Principal or Assistant Principal.
- The Principal or Assistant Principal or Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator will supervise the detention session.
- Resolution of ongoing behavioural misdemeanours are at the discretion of the Principal.

Inappropriate Behaviours in the Schoolyard Warranting a ‘Strike’

- Throwing inappropriate objects eg. Sticks, stones
- Swearing / Abusive language
- Physically hurting another child eg. Kicking, scratching, punching
- Unacceptable behaviour in toilets
- Damaging school or neighbouring property
- Bullying
- Teasing
- Speaking disrespectfully to others
- Involvement in a fight causing injury
- Playing in out-of-bounds areas

Discipline Procedures – Suspension and Expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DET 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. Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

References:

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