

Pastoral Care Policy

Purpose

The Port School Pastoral Care Policy aims to provide a framework for School policies, programs, resources and practices, with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students and the School community. Port's Teaching and Learning Framework complement the approach to pastoral care.

Background

Wellbeing is characterised by a sustainable state of:

- Positive relationships and attitudes.
- Resilience.
- The ability to maximise strengths.
- High levels of satisfaction with learning experiences.

Port School aims to enhance the wellbeing of students, and to create and uncover pathways to a meaningful life, by providing experiences that enable student potential. It supports attainment of this vision through an environment that:

- Is safe, nurturing and inclusive.
- Fosters confidence, personal best and respect for self and others.
- Inspires students to live purposeful lives.

The Port Values underpin the School's commitment to students and all School community members:

Empowerment To enable each other to experience thoughts and feelings as valid and important.

Diversity To welcome, nurture and promote each other's differences.

Growth To keep the educational development and wellbeing of people at the centre of what we do.

Community To provide a safe and secure environment that promotes contribution, ownership and mutual respect.

Scope

This policy applies to all Port School staff.

Policy Statement

Port School implements the National Principles of Child Safe Organisations and is committed to providing a child-safe environment, which safeguards all students and promotes practices that provide for the safety, wellbeing and welfare of young people.

A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students, their parents/guardians and the school community. This creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to young people, whilst increasing the prospect of identifying any harm. The School explicitly forbids any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment. Student wellbeing is the focus of this policy.

Definitions

Mental health is a 'state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community' (*as defined by the World Health Organisation*).

Child abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a caregiver.

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is exposed to, or involved in sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and development level, and includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- The child is the subject of bribery, coercion, threat, violence or exploitation.

- The child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour.
- There is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Emotional abuse includes:

- Psychological abuse.
- Being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.

Neglect is when children do not receive adequate food or shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged, or they are injured. Neglect may be acute, episodic or chronic.

- Adequate care for the child.
- Effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child.

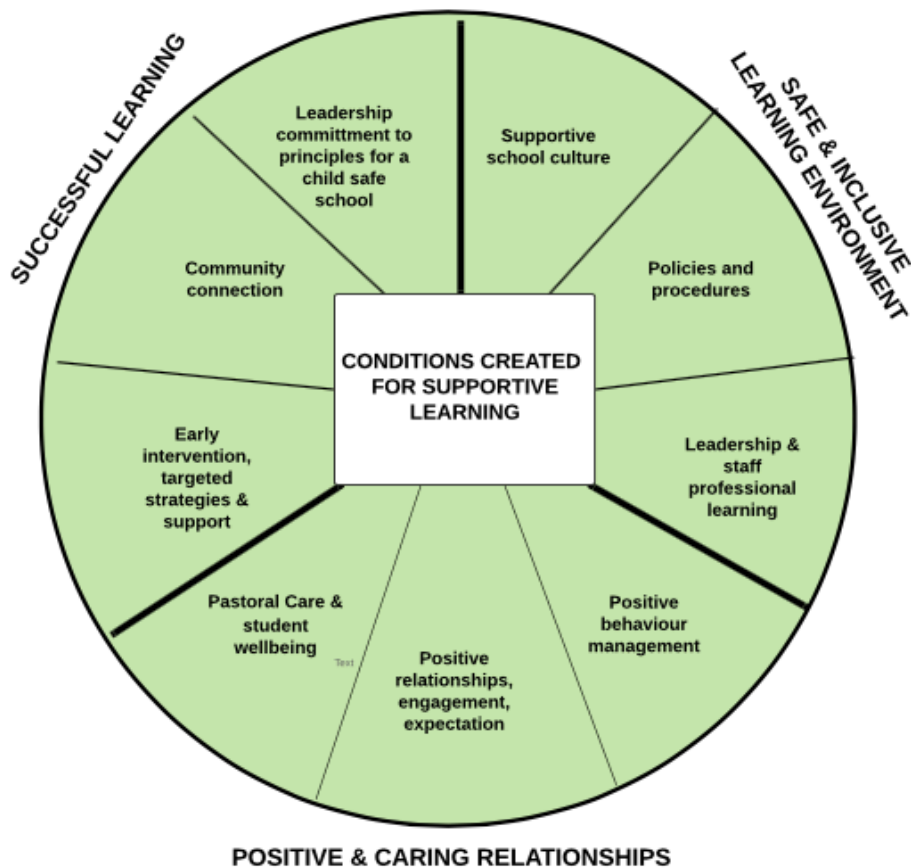
Corporal punishment

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; it can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm.

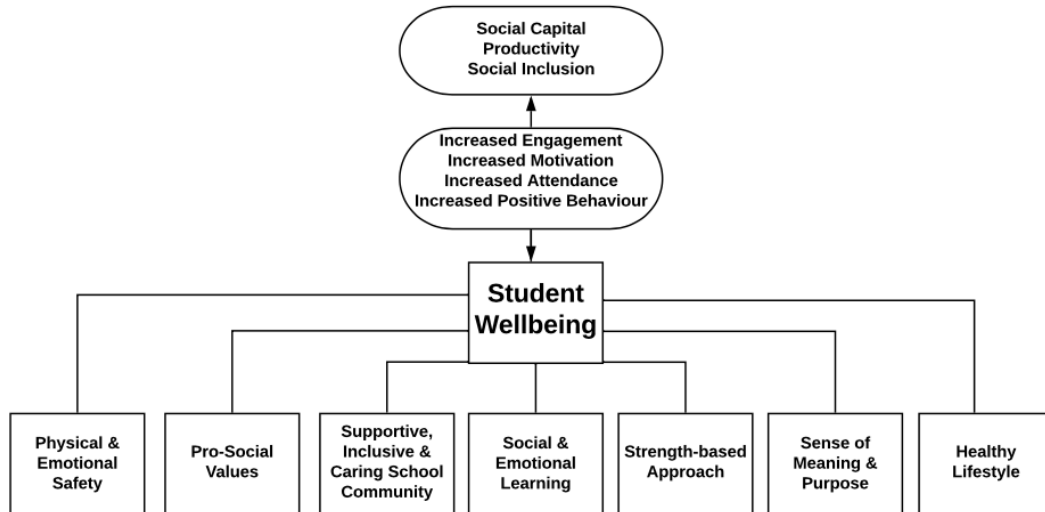
Degrading punishment

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

Port's Wheel of Wellbeing



Mental health and wellbeing is about being cognitively, emotionally and socially healthy. It is the way we think, feel and develop relationships and not the absence of a mental health condition.



Source: Noble & Wyatt (2008) Scoping Study into Approaches into Student Wellbeing

Principles

Port School is a provider to a very specific student base and Port staff work together to provide students with the opportunity to succeed and grow in a learning environment that is engaging, encouraging, dynamic and purposeful.

Quality teaching and learning is central to our purpose at Port School. The School’s approach to pedagogy is aligned with the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)* and is communicated through its Teaching and Learning Framework. This framework reflects the shared beliefs of the School community about high quality teaching, pastoral care and professional practice. The framework guides the actions and behaviours that shape and direct staff practice at the School.

- Engaging, innovative and differentiated programs and delivery.
- Aligning curriculum and assessment.
- Developing and maintaining positive relationships with high expectations for engagement and achievement.
- Creating and maintaining safe, supportive and inclusive living and learning environments.
- Ongoing reflection, analysis and adaptation.
- Commitment to learning as a lifelong pursuit.
- Establishing and maintaining successful partnerships.



Associated Links

This policy links with:

- **National Principles for Child Safe Organisations**, which
 - Create an environment where children's safety and wellbeing are the centre of thought, values and actions.
 - Place emphasis on genuine engagement with and valuing of children.
 - Create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people.
 - Create conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm.
 - Respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.
- **Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)**, which
 - Use teaching strategies based on the knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.
- **Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (KP:CPC)**, which
 - Aims to help children and students to learn to recognise abuse and develop ways of protecting themselves from abuse.

Responsibilities

Port School and its staff are responsible for creating conditions enabling students to learn within a safe, respectful and positive environment. In order to ensure this, the School leadership will:

- Develop procedures based on policy that enable students to successfully learn in a safe and inclusive environment and to experience positive and caring relationships.
- Ensure all legislative requirements are followed.
- Ensure staff has a working knowledge of school policies and procedures, and the legislation surrounding them.
- Create and maintain a safe and positive learning environment.
- Align staff roles and responsibilities with student wellbeing policies and practices.
- Supply programs, structures and staff with appropriate and relevant strategies and resources.
- Promote and demonstrate Port School Values.
- Comply with the Port School Code of Conduct and promote and demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour.

Staff has a responsibility to:

- Ensure they have a working knowledge of school policies, procedures and relevant legislation.
- Create and maintain a safe and positive learning environment.
- Establish and maintain successful relationships with students and their parents/guardian.
- Develop engaging, innovative and differentiated programs and delivery.
- Inform themselves of particular needs of individual students.
- Develop and communicate strategies to ensure individual student needs are addressed in a consistent manner.
- Give feedback to students, their parent/guardian and other staff.
- Maintain accurate records relating to attendance, parent communication, confidential notes about interviews and telephone calls, behaviour incidents.
- Maintain records and report on student achievement.
- Communicate regularly and effectively with the student's parent/guardian.
- Promote and demonstrate Port School Values.
- Comply with the Port School Code of Conduct and promote and demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour.