

## Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

### Rationale

Gordon Education Centre (GEC) encourages and supports young people to live happy and fulfilling lives by nurturing independence and self-worth. This policy aligns to the undertaking by the Department for Education to provide safe, secure learning community and high quality learning opportunities for every student in South Australian Schools. The Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy is the overarching document which provides a framework for all student learning across our school community. Gordon Education Centre is committed to providing a safe, secure environment which thrives on high quality learning and engagement opportunities for all students. Students can only reach their full potential when they are happy, healthy, safe and engaged in meaningful learning activities and when there is a positive school culture that is fair and respectful to engage and support their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

### School Profile

The Gordon Education Centre is located in Mount Gambier in the Lower South East of South Australia. We service the Mount Gambier district and surrounding areas and are part of the Blue Lake Partnership. We are a Foundation to year 12 special school who offer modified SACE. We have an enrolment of approximately of 67 students.

### School Vision

Towards Independence

### School Values

I am responsible

I am a learner

I am safe

### Aims-Guiding Principles

Our school aims to ensure every student is working towards independence by:

- Creating a child safe and friendly learning environment where students have a right to feel and be safe. The wellbeing of the students in our care will always be our first priority.
- Collaboratively developing and implementing a fair and respectful whole school engagement and positive behaviour support approach.
- Including pro-social values and behaviour within curriculum delivery to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and

engagement.

- Providing students with a sense of ownership of their environment, promoting active student participation and voice.
- Supporting families to engage in their child's learning and building our students capacity as active learners.
- Promoting active student participation to improve student outcomes and engagement.
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of students who require social/emotional and educational support.
- Promoting the participation and empowerment of students.
- Identifying and responding to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- Implementing preventative and early intervention approaches.
- Building strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators.
- Providing evidence based systems and interventions for accountability.
- Creating learning communities.
- Providing a stimulating and secure learning environment.

### Student Engagement Definition

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students at our school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional, or educational support to flourish at school.

The partnership and communication between home and school is central to student attendance and effective engagement in instruction and learning. Student engagement can be defined by three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive.

- **Behavioural engagement** refers to student's participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities within the school program.
- **Emotional engagement** encompasses student's emotional reactions while in the classroom and school environment. It defines the student's sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.
- **Cognitive engagement** relates to student's investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation to self-regulation.

## Learning and Teaching

Gordon Education Centre engages students to succeed in a highly effective learning environment by:

- Building a shared vision as a Learning Community (use of data, collaboration and focus on learning) which reflects consistent expectations implemented within the classroom across the school.
- Providing a rigorous curriculum to identify priority learning
- Monitoring students' progress through One Plan (which includes the child's Negotiated Education Plan)
- Using research based best practice, collaboration and reflective practice to identify and implement highly effective and consistent instructional practice across each section of the school.
- Aligning resources to support the identification and intervention of students need for educational, social and emotional support.

### Key Strategies and tools for engagement include:

- Augmentative and Alternate Communication Devices - promotes student voice for all young people.
- One Plan- A tool for students, educators, families and service providers to ensure that reasonable adjustments (Negotiated Education Plans, Speech ect) are recorded with continuity throughout their schooling.
- Sensory Programs- Optimise learning readiness, employing specific strategies to assist in regulating behaviour for increased engagement in learning.
- Visual Supports- Visual supports are provided within the classroom and in all external learning spaces to ensure students have a voice.
- Classroom Environments- To compliment primary intervention strategies classroom and school environments are structured in a range of ways to accommodate differentiated learning such as classroom break spaces, sensory rooms, rainbow rooms and courtyards.
- Technology- Compliments the learning style of many students, enables broader access to the curriculum and promotes increased engagement and motivation.
- Enrichment Programs- Cater to student's personal strengths and interests and currently include: music program, dance program, bike program, physical education program, cooking program and lunchtime clubs.
- Contexts for learning- Students across the whole school are offered the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of engaging activities external to their classroom. These are student

lead activities which focus on motivation, engagement and connection to real learning in a range of environments.

- Electives- promotes student choice making and values student voice.

## Behaviour support

Highly effective instructional support underpinned by positive behaviour practices and interventions are the foundations for improving student outcomes. School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) provides an operational framework for achieving these outcomes.

SWPBS emphasises four integrated elements:

- Data for decision making.
- Measurable outcomes supported and evaluated by data.
- Practices with evidence that these outcomes are achievable.
- Systems that efficiently and effectively support implementation of these practices.

Positive behaviour support and social skills development are a crucial aspect of the curriculum resulting in high levels of student engagement.

Positive behaviour support focuses on a school wide multi-tiered approach:

- Tier 1 behaviour support: focus on preventative proactive strategies that encourage engagement and teach skills to manage and regulate behaviour. Every student has an individual support plan which identifies current skill level, potential difficulties and strategies and resources to support successful learning and engagement.
- Tier 2 behaviour support: students who require additional resources to acquire social skills will have an individual behaviour support plan developed in partnership with families/carers.
- Tier 3 behaviour support: students may require external assistance from outside the school specifically targeting high risk behaviours. The behaviour plan is managed within a group forum including the involvement of external agencies. The behaviour plan will be reviewed to include a functional behaviour analysis and behaviour response plan for escalated high risk behaviours. This plan is reviewed monthly with relevant key people.

The Positive Behaviour Support Policy outlines the processes in place to support engagement and wellbeing in addressing behaviour support across all school environments.

We have a proactive approach to promoting student wellbeing and engagement through:

- Forums to discuss, resource and collaborate on all issues relating to engagement and wellbeing with the leadership team.
- Established relationships with parent and carers group.
- Lunch time clubs running to allow students to access an alternate play setting.
- A wide range of parent forums and information sessions conducted throughout the school year.
- Close links with the behaviour support coaches and special educators at the Mount Gambier Education Office.
- Offer a range of Augmentative Alternate Communication devices for student voice.

