

Appendix: Annual Report 2019

1. Enrolment Policy

Wenona is a global learning community, educating and empowering young women to serve and shape their world. We offer a caring community and vibrant learning environment for Day Girls in Kindergarten to Year 12 and Boarders in Years 7 to 12.

Rationale

The School operates within the policies of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). The School's Enrolment Policy has been developed in order to provide guidelines for the enrolment of students to ensure that all enrolment applications are dealt with justly and consistently.

Policy Statement

The School's key intake years are Kindergarten, Year 3, Year 5 and Year 7. Opportunities for enrolment occasionally arise in other years.

The offer of a place at Wenona is at the discretion of the Principal with consideration given to the:

- date of receipt of the Application for Enrolment form
- availability of an appropriate day or boarding place for the student
- student's ability to benefit from the School's programs
- family connection to the School
- outcome of an enrolment interview
- ability of the School to meet the needs and ambitions of the student.

The Principal has discretionary authority in relation to the enrolment of any student at Wenona. This could extend to the enrolment of daughters of families transferring from interstate or overseas, or for other reasons requiring special consideration, pending the availability of places at the School at the time of the requested enrolment.

Once enrolled, students are expected to act consistently with the Schools' ethos and comply with the School rules to maintain their enrolment. Parents are also expected to be supportive of the ethos of the School, and to abide by the Community Code of Conduct.

2. Student Management Policy

Wenona has a strong ethos of pastoral care and seeks to nurture the growth and development of students within a safe, engaging and caring learning environment. Student management policies and practices are undergirded by a whole-school approach to pastoral care, social and emotional learning, and character development. Schools provide an important social context for students in which they are supported, whilst also being encouraged to accept responsibility for their behaviour. The School will seek to include a balance of clear and consistent consequences and affirmations, in its management of student behaviour.

The Student Code of Behaviour and the list of School Rules and Guidelines are key guides to the management of students. The Code is framed within a pastoral system designed to support and nurture

individual student development towards respect for self and others, personal integrity and responsibility, compassion and appropriate conduct. The School has developed a set of easily understood rules and guidelines to provide direction to students. These principles are also followed by the School Boarding House.

Policy Statement

The School aims to:

- develop and maintain a safe, caring, supportive and orderly learning environment
- establish structures and processes which focus on a positive, preventative approach to the management of students, with a focus on early intervention
- define and promote acceptable student behaviour and appropriate discipline and support measures, through the communication of clear expectations and guidelines
- protect the safety of both individuals and the School community, discourage destructive behaviours, restore relationships, encourage reconciliation, foster responsibility, enable personal growth and promote the common good
- provide opportunities for students to learn and practise appropriate pro-social behaviours and self-discipline.

Guiding principles

- The management of students will be enhanced through a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Student behaviour is best managed in ways that promote School values, restorative justice practices and are educative in nature.
- All processes and decisions relating to the management of students are aligned with the values of the School and the principles of procedural fairness.
- Student behaviour should not be viewed in isolation but as part of an interaction between the student, staff and the School community.
- Wenona staff will demonstrate accountability for evidence-based decision making, reporting, record keeping and referral to appropriate support.
- Parental involvement and support in the management of students are critical to the success of the interventions and strategies.
- Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited.

All student management processes will be in harmony with the School's Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy, and the Staff Code of Conduct. Student management procedures will vary according to the breach of rules or Code, and the context of the situation.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that the behaviour and appearance of students conforms to School rules and expectations. Teachers are required to refer more serious incidents to their Head of Department, Year Coordinator, Head of School, or to the Deputy Principal (Student Wellbeing), or Principal, as appropriate.

3. Anti-bullying Policy

Wenona seeks to provide a friendly, safe and caring environment for all members of the School community; an environment which is conducive to academic achievement and personal growth, free from oppression or fear.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour that affects everyone. All types of bullying and harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the School. Every member of the school community has the right to be treated with respect and is expected to support the School in preventing bullying and harassment.

The School encourages a community of kindness and care for others. This means that anyone who is aware of any type of bullying is expected to tell a member of staff immediately. When bullying behaviour is brought to the School's attention, it will seek to respond promptly and effectively.

Bystander support of bullying, be it in person or online, can encourage these anti-social behaviours, and the School will not tolerate either active or passive support of bullying. Students will be encouraged not to be part of the problem; not to pass the rumour or derogatory message, to walk away from these acts when they see them, to reach out to the target(s) of bullying, to constructively attempt to stop the bully, and to report acts of bullying to a member of staff.

Policy Statement

The School aims to:

- To implement and to maintain a whole School approach that addresses the problem of bullying
- For all members of the Wenona community to have a good understanding of what bullying is and to be familiar with the School policy
- To empower girls to become proactive in problem solving associated with bullying
- That girls will have an awareness of what they should do if they are bullied or if they observe bullying
- To develop a culture of inclusiveness and care, in which bullying behaviour is not accepted and is reported
- That all girls who experience bullying understand that they will be supported by the School
- To support girls who have been involved in bullying to adopt more caring and positive peer relationships.

Definitions

Bullying is repeated, intentional psychological or physical oppression, of a less powerful person or group of persons, by a more powerful person or group of persons. Bullying is ongoing in nature and the bully is encouraged by another's pain, distress, fear or humiliation.

Bullying generally takes one of the following forms:

- **Indirect** Being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (eg. hiding bags or books)
 - **Physical** Pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, slapping or any form of violence
 - **Non-verbal** Writing unkind or threatening notes, graffiti, rude gestures, stares
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- **Verbal** Name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm, yelling
- **Cyber** Unkind or threatening messages or images via electronic communication (eg. social networks, apps, Internet blogs, text messaging and calls, instant messaging etc.)

Implementation

The Student Code of Behaviour, as outlined in the Student Planner, states clearly the rights and responsibilities of each girl in relation to bullying. Behavioural consequences may in the first instance include one of a range of escalating detentions. As stated in the Staff Guidelines around Student Behaviour, serious breaches of conduct (which can include bullying,) may, at the discretion of the Principal, result in suspension or expulsion.

The School is committed to managing each disclosed case of bullying through the provision of appropriate warnings and consequences, coupled with a range of supports for both the girl(s) subject to the bullying, and the perpetrator(s) of the bullying. Records of all incidents of bullying will be retained by the School, to assist in the identification of any patterns of bullying behaviour, and to assist in decisions related to the provision of appropriate consequences.

Parent and student surveys on peer relations will be conducted on a regular basis. The findings of these surveys will contribute to the ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review of the effectiveness of the Policy and Guidelines.

Prevention

A key element of this Policy against bullying is to raise awareness of the significant impact of bullying and to develop empathy towards the subject(s) of the bullying.

Measures adopted by the School may include:

- Involvement of the Local Police School Liaison Officer (North Sydney Police: 9956 3199) in the development of strategies to reduce the incidence of bullying, including bullying awareness presentation (as part of the School's broader anti-bullying education program)
 - Provision of contact details to students of external organisations that support students who experience bullying. These include Headspace (Chatswood: 8021 3668) and Kids Helpline: 1800 551800, in addition to internal counselling support from the School's psychologist team.
 - Embedding information and concepts related to bullying within both the formal curriculum (eg. PDHPE and the Pastoral Care program, promoting class teacher led Pastoral Care discussion)
 - Providing professional development for staff on promoting positive relationships and managing bullying, ensuring constructive role modelling
 - Implementing and communicating a series of bullying deterrents, through a clear set of School rules and consequences
 - Introducing Year Group presentations with anti-bullying messages (eg. plays)
 - Providing parent information evenings related to peer relations
 - Providing opportunities for cross-school student leadership and involvement, such as Peer Support and Student Representative Council
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- Reinforcing anti-bullying messages and promoting positive peer relationships at key public forums such as Assemblies, Year Group and House meetings
- Reinforcing of positive, pro-social behaviours.

4. Grievance Procedures

Rationale

Wenona promotes a school community where each member is respected and valued. Positive relationships, professional interactions and a willingness to take a pro-active response towards resolving an ongoing concern in a considerate and calm manner is incumbent on all members of the Wenona community as a means to sustaining a positive, welcoming and well-functioning school community.

The School recognises that from time to time members of the school community and public may hold concerns. It is in the interest of all parties that these concerns or grievances be raised with the School in a timely, professional and appropriate manner.

The following guidelines are aimed at assisting members of the community in adopting the most appropriate and supportive approach to raising concerns and addressing grievances. The guidelines also aim to ensure that the rights of the School, students and parents are:

- protected when a concern or grievance is submitted
- resolved as expeditiously and effectively as possible
- handled following standard procedures across the School and Wenona community and processed in accordance with government requirements.

Guidelines for raising concerns For students and parents

All matters relating to child protection, staff misconduct or reportable conduct should be reported directly to the Principal. More information about reporting these concerns are available in the Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy.

For all other concerns, in the first instance, students and parents should communicate verbally or in written form with the subject teacher (Senior School) or class teacher (Junior School).

It may be appropriate to raise some concerns with the relevant Year Coordinator, Head of School or appropriate Director (Performing Arts, ICT, Sport, and Boarding), or Head of Curriculum (Kindergarten to Year 6), or the Head of Teaching and Learning (Years 10 to 12). If a concern is ongoing, or is of a more serious nature, or where it is not appropriate to deal with the teacher directly, then it should be outlined in writing and sent directly to the appropriate Head of School, Deputy Principal or Principal.

On receipt of a written complaint, the Principal, or appropriate delegate, will give the matter due consideration and communicate back to the person concerned a course of action in a reasonable time frame. At any stage, a student or parent can contact the Principal's Office for support or information regarding these guidelines. The Principal or delegate will reply formally to a written letter to confirm the outcome of the matter or concern under investigation.

Where there is a concern shared by a group of parents, parents are required to write individual letters to represent their personal views only. Petitions, virtual forums, web group pages, internet or chain email, or

other similar forms of communication, are not an acceptable or appropriate way to raise or lodge a grievance at Wenona.

These forms of complaint do not carry greater weight than a letter written by an individual parent and they are not perceived to be supportive of the School or the community; nor are they the most productive or helpful way of solving a concern.

For school visitors and the public

In the first instance, visitors and members of the public should communicate any issues or concerns in writing, or telephone if urgent, to the relevant Head of School, Deputy Principal or the Principal. If the concern raised is serious, the Principal or her delegate will give the matter immediate consideration and communicate formally back to the visitor or member of the public concerned a pathway forward or final decision within a reasonable timeframe.

A serious concern about the actions of a Member of the Board of Governors or the Principal should be communicated to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

Overseas Students

Full fee-paying Overseas Students (FFOS) should refer to the Overseas Student Handbook for further guidelines regarding Complaints and Appeals.

5. Student Attendance Policy

Under the NSW Education Act, schools are required to ensure that individual students meet certain attendance standards. This includes mandatory attendance for students under 17 years of age unless exemptions are applicable.

From January 2012 all schools in NSW are required to use the mandatory Attendance Codes to record student attendance on the attendance register or roll.

Policy Statement

The Principal is legally responsible for keeping accurate records of attendance and for deciding if the reason given for non-attendance is justified.

Wenona maintains a register of enrolment for each student, including name, age, street address of the student and the name and contact details for the parent/guardian. The date of enrolment, and where appropriate the date of leaving and the student's destination are recorded. If a transfer from another school, details are recorded. This register is retained by the School for a minimum of five (5) years before archiving.

Wenona maintains a register of daily attendance and monitors any absences. All absences identified from School or class must be explained in correspondence from a parent or guardian. Unexplained absences are recorded, and an SMS notification of the absence is sent to the parent/guardian. Continued unexplained absence, or unsatisfactory attendance is escalated to the Head of School and the Deputy Principal (School Operations). The register of attendance is retained by the School for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made.

The Principal may request medical certificates or other documentation for long or frequent absences explained by the parents as being due to illness. Therefore, all absences require an explanation, as it is a condition of enrolment that you send your child to school every day.

Requests for exemption from School that fall under the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act are made to the Principal. Copies of all Certificates issued under the delegation are kept in the student file.