

## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING POLICY

### 1. OVERALL POLICY

All skills are learned through the same processes, all requiring language, social interaction, and tasks just beyond current skill level giving space for development. Everyone will vary in their needs as they develop specific skills and knowledge, and within these processes' mistakes are crucial to build self – awareness and autonomy in directing further learning. These processes in learning relational behaviour are the same as learning to read, to multiply, paint, and kick a ball. Just as discrimination towards needs in learning to read, or mistakes in maths will not be tolerated, nor will discrimination to students having greater needs or making mistakes in relational behaviour.

Relational behaviour at Kinma is taught to support a vibrant primary and preschool that allows all students, staff and families to be treated fairly and with dignity. We do so in an environment that supports cohesion and inclusion; free from intimidation, harassment, victimisation, discrimination and bullying<sup>1</sup>.

The school supports the emotional wellbeing of students and Educators and abstains from corporal punishment and other coercive and manipulative approaches. The school does not support the administration of corporal punishment by anyone including parents enforcing discipline at school.

### 2. KINMA CONTEXT

Students respond to courteous and considerate treatment by their friends and adults, and will approach activities with concentration and motivation when tasks are suited to their needs and interests. We acknowledge that students are learning throughout their Kinma journey and will respond depending on their age and ability. Educators are mindful of the ages and skills of the children involved and offer support and assistance as appropriate.

At Kinma, students are encouraged to be responsible, independent and develop discipline for themselves from within. We encourage students to respond to limits and gradually develop the skills to set their own limits. We carefully consider the development of each student in all areas, including student behaviour. At Kinma, we create learning environments to develop:

- An understanding and purpose for relational behaviour in community
- have respect for others and their differences
- display honesty in action and thought
- value cooperation
- take pride in their school, their classrooms and their groups.

Kinma acknowledges that:

- some testing of limits is normal for students

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<sup>1</sup> “Bullying behaviour has three key features. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship. It is ongoing and repeated, and it involves behaviours that can cause harm.” (see: [education.nsw.gov.au](http://education.nsw.gov.au))

- students gain a sense of security in their school environment knowing that, where necessary, limits will be placed on their behaviour and that of others
- misbehaviour is often a student's expression of underlying factors  
Educators take steps to understand the intent of students' behaviour and to respond to the underlying issues. This is done in collaboration with students and where appropriate with parents, always giving due consideration to the goal of developing greater relational behaviours.

### **3. EMBEDDED PRACTICE -- WHAT WE DO / KNOW**

#### **All behaviour is a form of communication**

Staff are cognisant that behaviours are utilised to communicate a need or gain assistance if something does not make sense, is threatening, is out of their control. Hence the importance of growing the skill set.

#### **We support children to regulate their own behaviour**

From birth children begin to explore how the social world works. Staff can support children to learn about interdependence and to become considerate humans.

#### **We actively develop a relationship**

Staff, parents and students develop good relations based on open communication, humour, respect and shared learning experiences. These relationships provide a solid foundation from which to support children as they develop self-confidence and skills to manage their own behaviour.

#### **We promote independence in students**

At Kinma we believe it is important for students to develop independence and a sense that "I can do it". While staff are on hand to support all situations, we encourage students to "have a go" or to gain assistance from peers; not to turn automatically to an adult for the answers.

At Kinma, staff are always looking for ways to empower students, as empowerment leads to a greater self-awareness and increased self-esteem. Students with good self-esteem are in a sound position to develop self-discipline.

#### **We create opportunities for students to contribute to the Kinma community**

Staff listen to, and act on, students' ideas and involve students in decision-making at every opportunity so that they can make a positive contribution to their own lives at Kinma. Key opportunities for student involvement include daily Kinma life, weekly school and class meetings, inquiry-based learning and brainstorming study themes.

#### **We make encouragement a habit**

Encouragement focuses on effort and is positive and empowering. The focus is on improvement and confidence building and is offered at all times.

#### **We support communication – saying sorry removes the conversation**

Interaction is between more than one person and by directing an apology (say you are sorry) we limit the communication and understanding behind an action. Both children are finding ways to communicate. Saying sorry as a directive shuts down the child's thoughts and feelings, needs and perspectives, motives and values. Staff act as mediator and help children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others.

### **We develop a healthy attitude to mistakes**

Our mistakes have the potential of providing our greatest learning opportunities. When students make errors, constructive feedback is provided so that students can learn from their mistakes.

### **We are good role models**

Students are more likely to develop a healthy lifestyle with positive self-concept and an optimistic outlook if others in their lives demonstrate this through their own behaviour.

### **We share with community our practices**

Staff share and deepen theirs and others skill set in dialogue with the school community. We offer community education in many ways -role modelling, group discussion, 1:1 discussion, family inclusion in preschool and primary and sharing practical methodology at parent information sessions, and in the weekly newsletter.

### **We reflect on Pedagogical decisions**

Staff reflect as individuals and as a team on the expectations they place on children. How may the child be feeling; are the set expectations possible with their current strengths and capabilities; is the tone and words consistent to understand expectation; is the messaging clear?

## **4. STANDARDS**

To support the ongoing development of social and emotional learning, students and staff have agreed on three basic rules at Kinma. Both students and staff use them to have a shared understanding and language. They are:

- respect yourself
- respect other people and living things
- respect our environment.

Staff and students have agreed that students have the right to:

- play and learn
- be safe and comfortable in the playground
- speak and be heard
- access resources, first aid and staff
- have a clean environment.

Staff and students have agreed that students have the responsibility:

- to learn and share with others
- to be kind to others by word or action
- to support everyone's rights
- to respect and maintain school resources and our physical environment.

The following actions are not acceptable:

- harassing, intimidating or violence (verbal or physical) with the intent to harm
- speaking to educators, parents, visitors or other students in an offensive manner
- deliberately damaging, defacing or stealing school property, other property or acting in a way likely to cause damage
- not acting responsibly towards people when outside the school community

- being in possession of an object, the purpose of which is to inflict harm to another or to property
- being in possession of cigarettes, alcohol, or unlawful drugs.

Students and staff discuss ways to relate within a community context during a range of interactions. The focus from staff at all times is on the desired behaviour, not the misbehaviour. For example, we would say, “walk please” rather than, “don’t run”. We then discuss our school standards, along with students’ rights and responsibilities. We use these standards to guide our teaching and learning practices.

## 5. SUPPORTING COMMUNITY

Guiding students in relational behaviours is an ongoing part of socialisation at Kinma. Kinma staff are well equipped to support students. Students are respected as individuals, but are expected to relate appropriately as members of the whole group. The level of support, intervention and guidance in relational behaviour will depend on the individual circumstances of each interaction.

The first connection generally taken in response to difficulty in relational interaction is discussion with the student/s involved to find out what happened, how they feel and why. Depending on the individual circumstances of each case, Kinma’s responses may also involve discussions with other students or staff.

If there is ongoing disruption to the group, the student/s may be required to work in another area to allow the majority of the class to continue uninterrupted in their learning (work outside, in the library, another classroom away from distraction, or the admin office) until such time as they, and staff, feel they can re- join the larger group. Initially, this is practiced to allow natural self- regulation development and give more flexibility within the learning situations.

If the student/s involved have ongoing difficulty in relational interaction, or the staff are concerned they will contact parents to share the behaviours and gain any further insights to support the child. Jointly, strategies and ideas can be shared and implemented at both home and school.

If a student’s behaviour poses a serious risk to themselves, others, or school property, the Head of School or their delegate will take immediate protective action. This may include contacting the family and having the student sent home for their own safety, or the safety of others.

In consultation with the class teacher, the Head of School (or delegate) will determine an appropriate action, which may involve an in-school or at-home suspension. Suspension refers to temporarily removing the student from their regular classes. Parents will be informed of the reason for the suspension.

The Head of School or delegate will conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the necessary safety measures and supports before the student can return to their regular class. During this time, the student may be asked to stay home while the assessment is completed.

Before the student’s return to Kinma, a meeting will be held with the parents and/or the student to discuss what accountability will look like and to agree on the actions and behaviours required for a safe reintegration into school.

If the behaviours or actions persist after suspension or despite interventions and support, further discussions with the parents will take place. This could lead to the difficult decision of ceasing enrolment, which means permanently removing the student from the school.

If any of these behaviours above also involve deliberate or repeated damage to, or theft of property, families will be expected to repair (preferably with the child supporting), replace or return the property.

## **6. PROCEDURE FOR CEASING ENROLMENT**

1. In the case of a disciplinary issue or continuing concerning behaviour which may result in expulsion the school will investigate the circumstances surrounding the issue. The Head of School may direct the student not to attend school while the investigation takes place and the parents/carer will be informed of this. An investigation will include the student being provided with information about the nature of the allegations and being given an opportunity to respond.
2. If after receiving the results of the investigation and hearing representations from the student, the Head of School forms the view that the student should be expelled, the Head of School will make a recommendation to that effect to the Education Committee and advise the student and parents/carer that this recommendation has been made.
3. The parents/carer or student may appeal against that recommendation to the Education Committee, setting out the reasons why the Education Committee should not act on the recommendation. Any appeal must be provided to the Education Committee no later than seven days after the parents/carer have been advised of the recommendation.
4. If no appeal is made within the time specified, the Education Committee will decide whether to accept the recommendation and advise the student and parents/carer of the decision.
5. If the student or parents/carer have lodged an appeal, the Education Committee will consider the recommendations, and the reasons provided by the student or parents/carer for not following the recommendation and will decide whether to accept the recommendation of the Head of School. The Education Committee will then advise the student and parents/carer of the decision.
6. The decision made by the Education Committee will be final.

## PLANNING CONTROL

### Supporting Documents

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Beyond Discipline – Alfie Kohn

### Regulatory Legislation and Considerations

- ACECQA National Quality Standards 2.1, 2.2, 7.1,
- Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) No 104a of 2010 Section 166, 162A, 167, 174
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) 12, 84, 147, 155, 156, 168, 175
- NSW Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools Manual Sep 2023
- Education Act (1990) NSW
- Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Disability Standards for Education 2008

### Planning control

**Next Scheduled Review** March 2025

- Review by Education Committee
- Publish on website

## VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description of changes, rationale
1.0	Date not known	Julie Carr, Manager	
2.0	September 2014	Juli Gassner, Education Coordinator	Education Committee review to refine practices.
2.1	November 2014	Julie Carr, Manager	Review of sections 5 and 6.
2.2	August 2018	Fran McCarthy	Change to language
3	March 2021	Julie Carr	Ongoing change to language
3.1	November 2022	Ed. Comm	Refocus away from behaviour management
3.2	February 2024	Sarah Nicholas, Director, Ed. Comm member	Include explicit steps for anti-bullying and discipline in line with “NSW Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools Manual” Sep 2023
4	January 2025	Education Committee	Updating discipline actions