



# **Plenty Parklands PS**

## **Student Engagement and Well Being Policy 2014**

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School Council President: Mr Michael Harrison**

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The principal class is responsible for leading the development and implementation of the Student Engagement Policy.

The school council will be responsible for approving the policy, monitoring its effectiveness and evaluating its success.

### 1. School profile statement

Plenty Parklands Primary School is in a growth area in Melbourne's northern suburbs and located in the city of Whittlesea. The school was designed for a long term enrolment of 800 students and in 2011 the current enrolment is 756, with 32 classrooms. The school community has a diverse ethnic population, with 31 nationalities represented, including 9 ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students. We have a number of economically disadvantaged students with approximately 17% of our families entitled to receive Educational Maintenance Allowance. At present we have 16 Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) students identified and funded. A total of 8 Education Support staff work with these students. We run Language Support Programs to cater for the students identified as experiencing difficulty with expressive and receptive language.

The school was accredited in 2005 as having a Performance and Development Culture.

Our school operates according to the Quality Framework based on strong relationships and agreed processes.

Our mission is, "to educate children as lifelong learners to shape a better Australia."

Our vision is that:

1. Our students have the individual skills and knowledge to succeed in a rapidly changing world.
2. Our students, staff and community learn and are cared for, in an environment that reflects our school values.
3. The school ethos adds value to each child's life through an interdependent partnership between parents, staff and students.
4. The school promotes individual and team excellence and individual and team contributions to national wellbeing.
5. The 12 Quality Principles provide the foundation on which the school operates and students, staff and parents learn.

### 2. Whole-school prevention statement

Our aim is to provide a positive school culture that promotes student belonging and connectedness, with a focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students. This is based on the belief that students will learn effectively in a safe and supported environment and when their teachers have high expectations for their learning. **Our core values form the basis of our ethos, our way of operating and the way students, staff and parents relate to one another.**

We also encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children.

The aim of our transition program is to minimise anxiety, increase resilience and ensure that students develop a readiness to make a successful transition between year levels.

In the context of the VELs, our school curriculum includes pro-social learning to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.

Overall our student attendance data indicates that we are performing at a higher level to other schools on adjusted school performance and above the median of all Victorian government schools. All teachers and welfare coordinators monitor student attendance on a regular basis, acknowledging good attendance and following up on student absences with either personal or phone contact.

Our students' enjoyment of school and sense of belonging results indicate that we are performing at a similar level to other schools after accounting for background characteristics known to make a difference to students' results and above the median of all Victorian government schools.

Communication of our policies and procedures on the care, safety and welfare of students to the school community is via the newsletter, webpage, Facebook, year level term overviews, Welcome pack (includes poster for students years 1-6), values poster which is given to our preps by their year 4 buddy, and assembly items including skits by JSC reps.

	<b>WHAT THE VALUES MEAN</b>	<b>WHAT THE VALUES LOOK LIKE AT PLENTY PARKLANDS</b>
<b>A FAIR GO FOR ALL</b>	Abiding by Australia's traditions of democracy and freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I let people join in.</i></li> <li>• <i>I share with others.</i></li> <li>• <i>I listen to other opinions.</i></li> <li>• <i>I take turns.</i></li> </ul>
<b>HONESTY</b>	Acting with integrity by being truthful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I tell the truth even when I have done the wrong thing.</i></li> <li>• <i>I follow the rules without being told.</i></li> <li>• <i>I tell the truth in a tactful way.</i></li> </ul>
<b>RESPECT</b>	Being considerate and courteous to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I listen when someone is speaking to me.</i></li> <li>• <i>I follow the school processes.</i></li> <li>• <i>I use equipment and buildings responsibly.</i></li> <li>• <i>I am punctual.</i></li> </ul>
<b>TRUST</b>	Being someone who is responsible and does the right thing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I speak and act appropriately at all times.</i></li> <li>• <i>I keep private matters, private.</i></li> <li>• <i>I can be relied on to be resilient.</i></li> </ul>
<b>CARING</b>	Showing compassion towards others and being considerate of their feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I take an interest in others.</i></li> <li>• <i>I encourage humor and laughter.</i></li> <li>• <i>I have zero tolerance of bullying.</i></li> <li>• <i>I get along with others.</i></li> </ul>
<b>TOLERANCE</b>	Living in harmony with others and appreciating diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I accept people by what they do and say, not what they look like or what their backgrounds are.</i></li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING</b>	Gaining knowledge and skills to become a lifelong learner and productive global citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I have a go at learning new things.</i></li> <li>• <i>I follow instructions.</i></li> <li>• <i>I am persistent.</i></li> <li>• <i>I am organised.</i></li> </ul>
<b>PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT</b>	Doing my personal best both individually and as a team member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I put in my best effort.</i></li> <li>• <i>I am confident.</i></li> <li>• <i>I learn from my mistakes.</i></li> <li>• <i>I do 5 star work.</i></li> </ul>

### 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 others' human rights. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

All DEECD 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 monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance web site.

### 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*. 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 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 Education Standards 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 repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

**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.

At PPPS, we believe that it is important to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and, in line with our values, to encourage care, tolerance, 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.

The effects of harassment or bullying include:

- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that they witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if the friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable. It is the responsibility of a 'bystander' to intercede or seek help.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

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.

Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

**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 you use and the things you say
- how you treat others
- respecting people's property (e.g. copyright)
- visiting appropriate places.
- not forwarding on inappropriate information
- respecting people's privacy by not using digital cameras including phones and other devices to record audio or visual material

Behaving safely online means:

- protecting your 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.

If you are being harassed or bullied you should:

- tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/welfare coordinator who you feel comfortable with.

*Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.*

### **Mandatory Reporting**

Society as a whole shares a responsibility for protecting the safety and wellbeing of children, regardless of whether they are mandated or not.

Under the duty of care principle, school staff has a responsibility to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care and must always act in the best interests of the child. If there are ANY concerns regarding the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, we must take immediate action.

Exercising a duty of care means:

- acting on concerns quickly and acting in the child's best interest
- protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of the children in our care
- seeking appropriate advice or consulting when unsure
- supporting a child at an interview
- providing ongoing support to a child and their family
- attending meetings such as DHS Child Protection Case Planning meetings or Student Support Group meetings

Duty of care is breached if a person fails to act in the way that a reasonable/diligent professional would do in the same situation.

### **Mandated school staff**

The Child Youth and Family Act (2005) states that doctors, nurses, teachers and police are mandated reporters. This means that they must report to DHS Child Protection when they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, resulting from physical injury or sexual abuse, and the parents have not, or are unlikely, or unable, to protect the child from harm of this type.

Teaching staff are ideally placed to recognise abnormal or changed behaviour and are likely to be the first to identify signs of abuse. For this reason, mandated staff MUST report any concerns they have to Child Protection. The CYFA states that any reports made to Child Protection in good faith and in the course of practising our profession are confidential and do not constitute a breach of professional ethics. The CYFA also states that the



content of a mandatory report cannot contravene privacy laws and cannot be the subject of legal or civil action against a reporter.

**Reporting for non-mandated school staff**

Any person who believes a child is at risk of harm, and in need of protection, should make a report to DHS Child Protection.

Non-mandated school staff fall into this category. If you are a non-mandated staff member and you have concerns that a child may be in need of protection, you should notify the principal or a member of the school leadership team immediately to discuss your concerns with a view to making a report to DHS Child Protection.

Non-Mandated Staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychologists</li> <li>Social Workers</li> <li>Speech Pathologists</li> <li>Education Support Officers (ESO)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-Teaching Staff</li> <li>Administration</li> <li>Cleaners</li> <li>Canteen Staff</li> </ul>

**Managing a disclosure**

If a child or young person makes a disclosure to you, it is important that you respond in an appropriate and supportive manner. It is also important to inform the child that there are some things you cannot keep a secret or confidential.

When managing a disclosure, we need to:

- stay calm and control expressions of panic or shock
- state clearly that the abuse was not the child's fault - no matter what the circumstances are
- listen to the child
- use the child's language and vocabulary
- emphasise that the child is not at fault
- reassure the child that you believe them and that disclosing the matter was the right thing to do
- tell the child you are required to report to DHS Child Protection to help stop the abuse.

**What information do we need to provide?**

When making a report to Child FIRST or DHS Child Protection, we should aim to provide as much information as possible.

The table below provides an outline of the types of information that may be useful.

Child	Family	Alleged Abuse	Notifier
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name/Gender/Age</li> <li>Any Disabilities</li> <li>Extended Family</li> <li>Parent/Carer</li> <li>Safe Now</li> <li>Background</li> <li>Cultural Status</li> <li>Religion</li> <li>Any Other Significant Factors</li> <li>Positive relationship with family member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Composition</li> <li>Siblings - Name/Age</li> <li>Disability in Family</li> <li>Language Spoken</li> <li>Other Adults at Home</li> <li>History</li> <li>Other Agencies</li> <li>Likely reaction to DHS Child Protection</li> <li>Family Aware of Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Times/Dates</li> <li>Nature of Incident</li> <li>Patterns</li> <li>History of Violence</li> <li>Previous Incidents</li> <li>Previous Agency Involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name</li> <li>Occupation</li> <li>Location</li> <li>Contact Details</li> <li>Relationship to Child</li> <li>Grounds for Belief</li> <li>Present/Prior Concerns</li> </ul>

## Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

### *Rights and Responsibilities of Students*

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• participate fully in the school’s educational program</li> </ul>	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• live by our values at all times towards themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community</li> <li>• participate fully in the school’s educational program and to attend regularly.</li> <li>• demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn and so contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.</li> <li>• respond to encouragement and support to take greater responsibility for their own learning and level of 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</li> </ul>

### *Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers*

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• model and live by our values at all times towards themselves, their peers, teachers and all other members of the school community</li> <li>• promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours</li> <li>• ensure their child’s regular attendance</li> <li>• engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning.</li> <li>• support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students</li> </ul>

**Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers**

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment</li> <li>• be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student</li> </ul>	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• model and live by our values at all times towards themselves, their students, their peers and all other members of the school community</li> <li>• fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy</li> <li>• know how students learn and how to teach them effectively</li> <li>• know the content they teach</li> <li>• know their students</li> <li>• plan and assess for effective learning</li> <li>• create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments</li> <li>• use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning</li> </ul>

**4. Shared expectations**

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole-school community. Shared expectations are:

- jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students
- clear and specific
- focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
- focused on prevention and early intervention
- supported by relevant procedures
- consistent, fair and reasonable
- linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

**Schools – principal class, 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.

The school’s values are based on the Australian Government’s nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

- **Care and Compassion** - care for self and others
- **Integrity** - act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- **Doing Your Best** - seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
- **Respect** - treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person’s point of view
- **Fair Go** - pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- **Responsibility** - be accountable for one’s own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
- **Freedom** - enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
- **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion** - be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others
- **Honesty and Trustworthiness** - be honest, sincere and seek the truth

School expectations include:

- all members living by the values at all times
- 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.

### Restorative Practices

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behavior management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

### Diversity in the school community

It is imperative that all staff, students, parents/carers and members of the whole school community exhibit positive relationships and value difference, as this supports both a positive school environment and effective classroom learning. The school 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
- developing an understanding and tolerance of diversity
- attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

## 5. School actions and consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school values program and strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required. For behaviour which does not match our values there are logical consequences where possible, including a range of strategies such as removal of the student from the yard or class, a verbal or written apology, or an act such as cleaning up or restoring an area to a safe standard.

When needed initial contact with a parent is made by the home group teacher via face to face, phone, email, written note, school proforma, as appropriate.

If follow up is required contact is made by the year level welfare coordinator using the appropriate means. If further follow up is needed principal class officers will become involved.

Sometimes students require an individualised student behaviour plan which outlines stages of behaviour and the consequences.

Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components:

**Behavioural engagement** refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.

**Emotional engagement** encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school. It can be defined as students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.

**Cognitive engagement** relates to students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

Modelling the values with the expectation that everyone lives by the values at all times is a vital strategy. This,

coupled with applying fair and consistent management and attendance policies that are collectively agreed on and fairly enforced will increase the likelihood that student connection to school is maintained,

Emphasis should be placed on issuing positive consequences for meeting high expectations.

Actions and consequences have an educational role and aim to foster positive relationships and retain the dignity of the student. Actions and consequences that isolate a student from learning are avoided where possible.

The school's actions and consequences section of the School Engagement Policy is framed in a positive way to encourage students to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience. Exclusions will only be applied when all other options have been exhausted or where the wellbeing or safety of that or another student is at risk.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- focussing on the values and what they look like in the classroom, in the yard, etc.
- using quality tools to establish predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- using quality tools to ensure student participation in the development of classroom and whole school processes and expectations
- providing personalised learning programs, where appropriate, for individual students
- consistently acknowledging all students
- using quality tools to empower students and involve them in the Gradual Release of Responsibility by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- promptly and consistently following up student absences
- implementing data driven attendance improvement strategies
- providing early identification of and supportive intervention for students at risk of non-attendance and early signs of disengagement

When concerns arise about a student's behaviour, or when a student is displaying chronic patterns of problem behaviour, a more targeted response may be required to support the child.

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
- involving the appropriate student welfare coordinator

Broader support strategies will include:

- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- tutoring/peer tutoring
- 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 experiential learning, camps/outdoor education, creative arts
- involving community support agencies

### **Citizenship**

Children will participate in –

- Singing the Australian National Anthem at the weekly school Assembly where appropriate.
- Community involvement and assistance programs.
- Support for local, national and international charities.
- Activities to develop school pride.

### Leadership

- School wide leadership roles include being monitors for i.e. the canteen, classroom, caring for Prep buddies, library, etc.
- Year 6 students will be given a wider range of opportunities to undertake leadership and responsibility roles as sports team captains and as school monitors i.e. sports store, recycling etc.
- Leadership roles to be acknowledged in school report form to parents.

### Junior School Council (JSC) is the major specific leadership program. Its purpose includes the following.

- To increase student participation in the school.
- To involve students in decision making.
- To teach students the processes and protocols to effectively achieve change.
- To make students aware of and involved in School Council.
- To develop a caring and responsible attitude to our school community
- To be aware of wider community decision making.
- To enhance staff, the School Council and parent awareness of the children's needs and priorities.
- JSC to be trained in meeting procedures.
- JSC to share office bearers' roles.
- JSC to develop action plans and put into practice the correct processes and protocols for 'making things happen'.
- Two JSC representatives to attend School Council meetings at intervals throughout the year.
- JSC to be on the agenda at School Council meetings and either a verbal or written report given.
- JSC trained in how to be good representatives.
- JSC trained in making decisions.
- JSC to organise feasible fundraising activities.

### Recognition of Student Achievement

Student achievement will be encouraged and recognised through –

- Student of the Week Awards
- The House Cup
- Class teacher awards
- Weekly newsletter acknowledgements
- Media coverage
- Musician of the Term
- Artist of the Term
- Physical Education student of the Term
- Indonesian student of the Term
- Performing Arts student of the Term
- Citizenship awards for one year six boy and one year six girl.
- Academic achievement awards for year six boys and girls. Personal Best awards for remaining year 6 students. Awards to be presented at the Year 6 Presentation evening.

### Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in **Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines** Appendices 12 to 18 (page 50) 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.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- withdrawal of privileges
- withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time. Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.
- detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular

classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.

Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

- convening of a support group

### Grounds for suspension:

A principal may suspend a student if, while attending school or travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, the student behaves in such a way as to threaten or constitute a danger to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person; or commits an act of significant violence against a person or causes significant damage to or destruction of property or is knowingly involved in the theft of property; or fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member; or consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student; or consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person.

### Procedures for suspension:

In determining whether to suspend a student, the principal must ensure that this response is appropriate to:

- the behaviour for which the student is being suspended
- the educational needs of the student
- any disability or additional learning needs of the student
- the age of the student
- the residential and social circumstances of the student

When a principal determines that a suspension is justified they must:

- Convene a meeting of the student support group to explain to the student and their parents/carers the reasons for the suspension, the school days on which the suspension shall occur and where the suspension will occur; provide contact details for additional support services to the student and their parents/carers, as appropriate; develop a Student Absence Learning Plan that outlines the school work to be undertaken during the period of suspension. If the suspension is for five days, provide details of the post suspension student support group meeting.
- Ensure that a comprehensive range of strategies, including student support groups, have been considered and implemented by the school to meet the education, social and emotional needs of the student.
- Provide the student, their parents/carers and the school council president with a Notice of suspension prior to the day on which the suspension commences.
- Provide the student and their parents/carers with a copy of the information brochures *Procedures for Suspension*, which outlines rights and responsibilities in terms of school exclusions.

### Procedures for immediate suspension:

The principal may suspend a student immediately and prior to convening a student support group meeting if the student behaves in such a way that would provide the basis for a suspension ordinarily, and their behaviour is such that they are putting the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students at significant risk.

In such cases, principals must be aware that they have a duty of care to provide supervision of the student until they can be collected from the school. If the parent/carer is unable to collect their child, the student must stay on school premises and be adequately supervised by a member of staff until the end of the school day.

### Period of suspension

The maximum continuous period a student can be suspended for more than 15 school days in any one school year without approval from the regional director. The school must provide appropriate and meaningful school work to the suspended student during the period of the suspension.

If a student reaches 15 days suspension, an expulsion is not the automatic consequence.

### Expulsion

Every Victorian student must be guaranteed a place in a school, registered training organisation or other alternative education setting. Regional offices can provide a structure to ensure that all schools in a network can work in partnership to provide a place for any student who requires one.

The principal is responsible for student expulsions. However, expulsion from a school is the most serious consequence open to the principal. It will only be used after all other relevant forms of behaviour management have been exhausted.

### Grounds for expulsion

A principal may expel a student if:

- the student does anything for which they can be suspended
- the student's behaviour is of such magnitude that affects the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students at the school

### Procedures prior to expulsion

Prior to an expulsion, the principal must ensure that:

- a range of strategies, consistent with a staged response has been implemented in the school
- the student and parents/carers are informed that expulsion is being considered and must be given the opportunity to be heard

### Procedures for expulsion

The principal is responsible for a student's expulsion. The principal must notify the regional director that a student support group is being convened to discuss expulsion. The principal must convene a student support group meeting to:

- provide the student and their parents/carers with a Notice of Expulsion before the day on which the expulsion commences
- provide a copy of the procedures for expulsion to the student and their parents/carers
- identify the future educational options most suited to the students needs
- a principal, within twenty four hours of the commencement of the expulsion, must forward a copy of the Notice of Expulsion to the regional director with a written expulsion report

### Expulsion appeal process

A principal's decision to expel a student can be appealed by the student or the student's parents/carers.

The principal must provide the student and parents/carers with an Expulsion Appeal proforma at the final student support group meeting.

The appeal must be lodged with the principal within ten school days of receiving the Notice of Expulsion and the principal must provide the regional director with a copy of the Expulsion Appeal within twenty four hours.

The regional director, or nominee must form an expulsion appeal review panel consisting of the regional director's nominee, school council president (or nominee) and a principal of another school.



## References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm</a>
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm</a>
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	<a href="http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf">http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf</a>
Disability Standards for Education	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm</a>
Safe Schools	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm</a> <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm</a> <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm</a>
Charter of Human Rights	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchrcharter.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchrcharter.htm</a> <a href="http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/">http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/</a>
Equal Opportunity Act	<a href="http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoo/eoact.htm">http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoo/eoact.htm</a>
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm</a>
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	<a href="http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf">http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf</a>