



Student Engagement Policy

Rationale

Fairfield Primary School recognises that targeted and individual strategies are needed to positively engage students. This takes into account the range of universal (school-wide), targeted (population-specific) and individual (student-specific) strategies which meet the needs of our students.

Aim

The Department of Education and Training is committed to providing safe, secure and high quality learning and development opportunities for every student in all Victorian schools. These students can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture that is fair and respectful to engage and support their learning.

This policy aims to support a vibrant and positive school culture with a shared enthusiasm for learning. It reflects the school community's aspirations, supports the school's strategic aims and addresses the school's legal obligations under relevant legislation.

This policy aims to support an engaging and safe environment for students.

Definitions

Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive.

- **Behavioural engagement** refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extra-curricular activities of the school.
- **Emotional engagement** encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a Student's sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.
- **Cognitive engagement** relates to a student's investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

School Profile, Values and Vision

Fairfield Primary School is an inner suburban school located in the suburb of Fairfield. We celebrated 130 years of teaching and learning in 2015. As of 2016, we have 492 students. The school has 33 school staff including student learning support and office staff. The school demographic has changed significantly over the past decade as the Fairfield/Northcote area has attracted young, professional families.

Our values at Fairfield Primary School are:

- Respect
- Creativity
- Excellence
- Community

Implementation

Engagement strategies

The school works collaboratively with students and parents/carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values.

The school implements a curriculum that inspires curiosity and engagement, leading to improved student outcomes. To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school.

The school monitors student attendance and implements attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.

Engagement strategies used at Fairfield Primary School are outlined in Appendix Two.

Identifying students in need of extra support

We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals, may need extra support in their learning to flourish at school. In other instances students may need additional support with social and emotional development when their behaviours impact on the learning environment of themselves or others.

Our school will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra support:

1. Personal information gathered upon enrolment
2. Attendance rates
3. Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
4. Behaviour observed by teachers and support staff
5. Engagement with student families
6. Reports from external experts such as educational psychologists, speech pathologists and other professionals.

Behaviour management

Behaviour management strategies and approaches may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour. It may be used in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to a student's behaviour.

Behaviour management measures that may be applied include:

1. Restorative approach, repairing relationships and any damage caused
2. Discussion with parents and families regarding behaviour management and where necessary developing a Behaviour Support Plan.

Behaviour management aims to retain the dignity of the student and any measures taken to exclude a student from learning will be avoided where possible. It is the responsibility of staff members to seek to restore their relationships with the student when any withdrawal has occurred.

Behaviour management strategies will be applied fairly and consistently in an agreed manner by all staff.

Behaviour management will always be proportionate to the nature of the behaviour, and will be employed in combination with support measures to identify and address causes of the behaviour.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and can only be approved by the principal. Fairfield Primary School will follow the processes for applying these measures as set out in the Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that our school will follow are available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/discipline.aspx>

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment is not permitted at Fairfield Primary School under any circumstances.

Strategies and guiding principles about behaviour management are detailed in Appendix 4 and its links.

Engaging with the community

The School values parent / carer input into its operations and curriculum and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion Survey, and from parent representatives on School Council. The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.

The school will create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

1. ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Engagement Policy
2. conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
3. providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
4. involving families with curriculum-related activities
5. involving families in information sessions and open activities

Parents' responsibilities for supporting their child's attendance and engagement are outlined in Appendix 1.

Evaluation

The school will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy's aim using the following:

1. The Attitudes to School Survey data
2. Student feedback
3. Parent survey data

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle or before if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.



Appendix One

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p><i>Students have a right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feel safe at school• Learn without interference in an encouraging environment• Be treated fairly and with respect	<p><i>Students have a responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect the rights of all students, teachers and community members• Demonstrate the school and community expectations and values• Participate in learning activities to the best of their ability• Contribute positively to the educational experiences of themselves and other students

Rights and Responsibilities of Staff

Rights	Responsibilities
<p><i>Staff have a right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work in a cooperative, positive and safe environment• Be supported in their professional duties by school administration, colleagues, parents and The Department of Education and Training (DET)• Be treated with respect by all members of the school community	<p><i>Staff have a responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide all students with quality educational experiences• Communicate effectively with students, parents and colleagues• Act in a professional manner• Demonstrate the school and community expectations and values

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p><i>Parents/Carers have a right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know what is required of their children in terms of learning and behaviour• Receive regular communication about their child's progress and behaviour	<p><i>Parents/Carers have a responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support their child's education• Ensure regular school attendance• Promote appropriate behaviour Demonstrate the school and community expectations and values• Act in a respectful and constructive manner when dealing with the school

Values:

Our values at Fairfield Primary School are:

- Respect
- Creativity
- Excellence
- Community

These values capture our commitment to the delivery of an authentic and engaging curriculum and positive learning interactions prefaced by high quality relationships between all staff, students and parents. We subscribe to doing the 'best we can' in all of our endeavours. We value creativity and apply this to how we reach solutions and engage all of our students in their learning. We also value our strong school community partnerships and see this as integral to our success and achievement within our local area and position in the Victorian Department of Education and Training, North Western Region.



Appendix Two

Student Engagement Strategies:

Universal strategies	Targeted strategies	Individual strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school will deliver a broad curriculum following AusVELS, as well as offering a complete Specialist Program. • Our school will develop behavioural expectations for all members of the school community centred on our school and personal values. • Our school will regularly acknowledge, both informally and formally, examples of positive behaviour and student achievements. • Our teachers will adopt a range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students. • Our teachers will be actively committed to improving classroom practice, ensuring consistent and flexible pedagogy. • Our teachers will develop positive and meaningful relationships with students to promote engagement, wellbeing and connectedness. • Our students will have the opportunity to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students will be involved in The Bounce Back Resiliency Program to build resilience and personal coping skills. • Our school will offer programs to provide opportunities for students to feel connected to school. Programs include: Junior School Council, Choir, Orchestra, Chess Club, Gardening Club, Tournament of the Minds and Art Zone • Our Grade 6 students will have leadership opportunities through House Captains, Specialist Captains, Art Show Hosts and Chefs and participating as School Ambassadors. • Our Grade 5 students will take part in a sporting program which will provide new experiences. This may consist of: Body, Mind, Spirit through Tae Kwon Do, Zumba, Yoga, Clinics in Football, Hockey and Basketball and Fencing. • Grade 5 and 6 students will have the opportunity to attend camps that promote learning outside the classroom. • Our Preps and senior students will be involved in the Buddies Program. • Special events, such as The Fair, The Art Show, Book Week, visiting performances, excursions and sporting events will provide further opportunities for connectedness 	<p>Strategies to support engagement and attendance of individual students include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Learning Plans or Specialist Modified Learning Plans • SMART Goal setting • Student lead conferences • Collaborative learning • Peer Tutoring • Cross Age Tutoring • Teaching aides to work with students who require additional support • Small group interventions • Personalised teaching



<p>participate in social and emotional learning, focusing on resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our Transition Program will minimise anxiety, increase resilience and ensure students make a successful transition between levels of the school• The active involvement of parents/carers will be promoted through reports, interviews, portfolios, meetings and classroom showcases• Parental participation and feedback will be encouraged through membership of the School Council and its subcommittees: Policy, Buildings and Grounds and Community , our Art Show and Fair Committees, Family Maths Nights, Classroom Helpers and Family Picnics• Attendance will be actively promoted to ensure parents/carers understand its importance	
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Appendix Three

Shared expectations:

	Students	Parents/Carers	Principal/teachers and staff
Engagement (participation in the classroom and other school activities)	<p>All students are encouraged to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparedness to engage in and take full advantage of the school programs • Effort to do their very best • Self-discipline to ensure a cooperative learning environment • Team work • Modelling of the school values • Preparedness to respect, value and learn from the differences of others • High expectations that they can learn • A capacity to reflect on and learn from their own differences 	<p>Parents/Carers are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive outcomes by valuing the importance of education and liaising with the school on their child's progress/needs • Support their child in their preparedness for the school day and in the provision of a supportive home environment • Monitor their child's school involvement and progress and communicate with the school when necessary • Support the school's effort to embrace diversity by promoting an understanding and appreciation of diversity in the home • Provide all relevant information to the school • Actively participate in supporting their child's learning by building a positive relationship with the school through attendance at student parent meetings and by 	<p>The school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with its duty of care obligations and responsibility to provide an educational environment that can effectively engage all students • Provide appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to have input into their learning and experience success • Uphold the right of every student to receive a comprehensive education • Collaborate with the school community to deliver policies and procedures consistent with its values, aspirations and the Department's guidelines • Identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning, educational and extra-curricular activities, facilities, student services and community linkages which are inclusive and responsive to student needs



		participating in student activities, celebrations and responding to communications	
Attendance	<p>All students are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day that the school is open to students Be prepared to participate fully in lessons Remain on the school premises during school times unless they have permission to leave 	<p>Parents/Carers are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that their child's enrolment and contact details are correct Ensure their child attends regularly Advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent Account for all student absences and keep family holidays within scheduled school holidays Support their child's learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students after prolonged absences Work cooperatively and collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance is of concern 	<p>The school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote full attendance through clear statements of expectations and procedures Ensure student attendance is recorded twice per day Maintain accurate attendance records Monitor and follow up on absences Work with families to provide ongoing support for students whose attendance pattern is of concern
Behaviour	<p>Students are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model the school values of respect, excellence, community and creativity 	<p>Parents/Carers are encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the school to promote a consistent approach that 	<p>The school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and review preventative approaches to behaviour issues by incorporating



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for their behaviour and its impact on others • comply with all reasonable requests from staff • Respect the rights of others to learn • Respect the property of others • Demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that supports the wellbeing of others and contributes to a positive school environment • Understand that bullying, including cyber bullying, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of others is unacceptable. 	<p>supports their child's learning, engagement and endeavour both in and out of school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have high expectations of their child's behaviour and an understanding of the school's behavioural expectations 	<p>student wellbeing at the centre of school business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor behaviour issues and the effectiveness of implemented strategies • Provide appropriate professional development opportunities for all staff to build their capacity to promote pro-social behaviours • Use the Student Engagement Policy to develop a class-based set of shared expectations with students • Teach students social competencies through curriculum content and pedagogical approach. • Employ behaviour management strategies that reflect expected positive behaviours. • Build a collegiate atmosphere to enable teachers to share strategies and support each other. • Encourage teachers to reflect on their own behaviour management approaches, seeking updated professional development where needed. • Work with families to promote consistency in positive behaviour
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			<p>management, with a focus on prevention and early intervention strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognise that for some students additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses• Involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary
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Links: See Fairfield Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy



Appendix Four

Also see: Staged Response, as outlined in the Department of Education and Training Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

Staged response checklist for student behaviours outside of shared expectations:

This stage response is intended to act as a guideline to enable effective decision-making when facing behavioural issues across the school.

Stage 1: Proactive strategies

Pro-active Strategies: Whole school strategies to pre-empt positive interactions

- Be a positive role model. Use a quiet, controlled voice and minimise audience.
- Work with parents, colleagues and support staff.
- Understand individual student needs.
- Develop social skills in curriculum and Bounce Back Programs.
- Define and teach school-wide expectations for all.
- Establish whole school values that are visibly promoted across the school.
- Develop consistent school-wide processes to identify at risk students.

Stage 2: Responding to individual students exhibiting challenging behaviours

Suggested strategies:

- Assess the behaviour and its functions, influences and triggers (include student, parents and school wellbeing staff as appropriate)
- Develop Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- Consider if any environmental changes need to be made
- Teach replacement behaviours
- Engage Student Support Services and/or community services to provide assessments or specialist support
- Establish peer groups that allow particular students to feel supported
- Consider out of school measures such as Student Development Centres
- Implement appropriate consequences that are proportional to behaviours (see below)
- Assist students to understand classroom rights and responsibilities



Steps to follow when children need support to manage their behaviours:

Rationale: All children make mistakes. We work to help children resolve their problems and work together to build better understandings.

