

# Dinjerra Primary School

## Student Welfare & Engagement Policy

To be read in conjunction with *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

SEPTEMBER 2013

Principal:

School Council President:

### Table of Contents

1.	Policy Statement	3
2.	Guidelines	3
3.	Program	4
4.	Links and Appendices	7
5.	Evaluation	8
6.	Appendices - Student Engagement Policy and Processes	8
7.	References	13

## 1. Policy Statement:

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked. That is why we made the decision to implement the School Wide – Positive Behaviours for Engagement & Learning at Dinjerra.

It is fundamental to acknowledge that each teacher is a vital source of support and a determinant in the success of their students. The teachers at this school will work collectively to ensure that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning. This school recognises the need to be engaging and inclusive, recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning and intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs.

Our school strives to be a learning community where students and teachers can relate well to each other, and where different ideas and viewpoints are valued and respected.

Our heterogeneous profile means that in any given class a range of student ability exists, in some cases spanning five years. Within this diversity, our school aims to challenge all students to become optimistic, resilient, creative and critical thinkers. We seek to promote our school values of diversity, achievement, responsibility and endeavour throughout the curriculum, in co-curricular activities, and in our daily operations.

Our teaching and learning philosophy is based around our 4Rs. (Refer to L& T Statement) That is:

- The teaching and learning is relevant to each student's interests, lives and aspirations
- The teaching and learning is rigorous, and each teacher will make a commitment to appropriately support, build and challenge every student
- Relationships are an essential component of effective learning and teaching
- Our practices are responsive to contemporary research and innovation.

Included with this Student Welfare Policy is the School Student Engagement Policy and Processes – see Appendix A.

## 2. Guidelines

- 2.1** The school will focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success.
- 2.2** The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management approach based on the principles of School-Wide Positive Behaviours for Engagement & Learning.
- 2.3** The school will 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.
- 2.4** The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.

- 2.5** The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- 2.6** The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- 2.7** The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- 2.8** The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- 2.9** The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

### **3. Program**

- 3.1.1** The curriculum programs of the school will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the school's students by:
- accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning
  - intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs
- 3.1.2** The school is committed to the delivery of an inclusive curriculum that ensures all our students have access to a quality education to meet their diverse needs.

To improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities, the following key strategies are in place:

- providing parents/carers with a learning program that best suits their child's needs
  - involving students and parents in programming and planning decisions
  - supporting students access to programs that let them pursue achievable pathways
  - ensuring the expertise of teachers working in our school is maintained and developed
- 3.2** Our school will implement a whole-school behaviour management approach that is based on pro-social values, social competencies, incentives and positive peer relationships as exemplified by the guiding principles of School Wide-Positive Behaviours for Engagement & Learning.

The key focus will be on prevention and early intervention strategies that:

- define and teach school-wide and classroom expectations
- establish consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- establish school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/ or behaviour difficulty
- provide school-wide and classroom processes for ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empower students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- provide a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning as determined by government funding
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

[Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatised Children](#), developed by the Office of the Child Safety Commissioner, provides teachers and schools with effective relationship based classroom and school-wide strategies.

The following link is to the DEECD's initiative of School Wide Positive Behaviours:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/wholeschoolengage.aspx>

- 3.3** Involvement in our school by parents and carers helps children achieve the best possible learning outcomes. Parents and carers will be provided with the opportunity to participate in school life, both formally and informally, through school council, the Parent Association, volunteering and staying up to date with news about what is happening in education via our newsletter.
- 3.4** The school's strategies to promote pro-social values will be whole-school in focus and include close links with curriculum. The Australian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS) will guide our implementation of this curriculum.
- 3.5** Student voice/student participation is about valuing people and valuing the learning that results when we engage the capacities and multiple voices in the school. It focuses on realising the leadership potential inherent within all learners. There are five dimensions to student participation:
1. student involvement in school and community development
  2. students as researchers and co-enquirers
  3. student feedback on teaching and learning
  4. students as peer-tutors
  5. student involvement as a manifestation of inclusion principles

The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change. Student participation ranges from young people sharing their opinions of problems and potential solutions through student council or in focus groups associated with school strategic planning. It also includes our students sharing their 'voice' by collaborating with teachers to actually improve education outcomes, including helping to improve teaching, curriculum and teacher-student relationships and leading to changes in student assessment.

- 3.6** 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 ensure that the unique experiences and skills of our students' families enrich the learning environment and the school community.

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

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Welfare Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- providing opportunities to enhance parenting knowledge and skills

**3.7.1** Implementing preventative and early intervention strategies to support positive behaviours is a key part of the Student Welfare Policy at our school. Prevention and early intervention strategies the school will deploy include:

- defining and teaching school-wide and classroom expectations
- establishing consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- establishing school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/ or behaviour difficulty
- providing school-wide and classroom processes for the ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

**3.7.2** The school will promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

- articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
- adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
- following up student absences promptly and consistently
- implementing data-driven attendance improvement strategies
- creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning
- providing early identification of, and supportive intervention for, students at risk of non-attendance
- linking with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support
- providing a staged response

**3.8.1** The school will use coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. The school will provide the following support structures:

- monitoring of, and responding to, protracted student absences
- trauma management plan
- protocol for mandatory reporting
- Student Support Group's for children in need
- Annual survey of students attitudes to the school and school environment

**3.8.2** Longitudinal data will be collected regarding frequency and types of welfare issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some sources of data are:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- parent survey data
- data from case management work with students
- Data collected through the SW-PBSEL

**3.9** The school will utilise relevant external student wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- DEECD SSO psychologists/speech pathologists/social workers for psychological and academic assessment
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- youth agencies
- local parent support groups
- relevant DEECD support staff
- C.A.S.A. [Centre Against Sexual Assault]
- School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)

#### **4. LINKS AND APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)**

Appendix A: Student Engagement Policy and Processes

Key Link connected with this policy is: [DEECD - Child Health and Wellbeing](#)

#### **5. EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

## **APPENDIX A:**

### **STUDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCESSES**

#### **1. Whole-School Prevention Statement**

The school actively seeks to engage with parents and the community to ensure a positive and inclusive school culture in which every student has the opportunity to succeed. The school works collaboratively with students and parents/ carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

The school appreciates its diverse student and parent population, and has measures in place to ensure all students enjoy the same level of access to the school's curriculum and co-curricular programs. Our teaching and learning philosophy is important in engaging all students in their academic learning. We use any additional funding such as National Partnership and Gonski funding to provide students with smaller classes to ensure student literacy and numeracy needs are being addressed. Our pastoral and welfare programs are tailored to address students' personal and social learning at various stages of their primary education. Our Disability and Impairment program provides vital assistance and support to students in and out of the classroom. Student leadership capacity is fostered through the Sports Captains, the house system, the role of the school captains and our peer support mentors.

Students receive added support in their learning through our community networks. These networks include the Ardoch foundation, the Commonwealth and National Banks.

The school uses interpreters where appropriate to assist parents/ carers to engage in the learning and progress of their child. This also enhances our capacity for effective decision making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs.

Student wellbeing (social, emotional and cognitive engagement) is addressed in a number of ways. At risk students are supported by our Wellbeing Team which includes the DEECD Psychologist and our Primary Welfare Officer.

Staged responses are implemented in addressing ongoing behavioural issues, and suspension from school is viewed as a last resort.

The school places an emphasis on 100% attendance, and has in place attendance targets. Attendance is monitored throughout the day, and student absences are followed up by Primary Welfare Officer or Assistant Principal. Attendance conferences are an important mechanism through which teachers and parents can work together to combat absenteeism and truancy. (Refer to our Attendance Policy).

The school values parent / carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion survey, and from parent representatives on School Council. The School Council provides financial assistance and encouragement to the Parents' Association in our efforts to build a sense of community.

## **2. Rights and Responsibilities:**

It is the right of all members of the School community to experience a safe, pleasant and supportive learning and teaching environment. Staff, students and parents/ carers have a right to be treated with respect, and enjoy an environment free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation. Teachers also have the rights to be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on their teaching and learning for that student.

Students have a responsibility to contribute positively to the educational experience for themselves and other students, to participate fully in the school's educational program, and to ensure that their behaviours demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

Parents/ carers have a responsibility to take an active interest in their child's educational progress, model and reinforce positive behaviours and ensure their child's regular attendance. They have a responsibility to support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, and engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.

Teachers have a responsibility to demonstrate the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching. That is, to know how students learn and how to teach them effectively, know the content they teach, know their students, plan and assess for effective learning, create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments, and use a range of strategies to engage students in effective learning. Teachers also have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Student Engagement Policy and Behaviour Policy.

All members have an obligation to ensure school property is appropriately used and maintained.

### 3. Shared expectations:

	Students	Parents/Carers	Principals/Teachers & Staff
<b>Engagement (participation in the classroom and other school activities)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate</li> <li>• <b>preparedness</b> to engage in and take full advantage of the school program</li> <li>• <b>effort</b> to do their very best</li> <li>• <b>self-discipline</b> to ensure a cooperative learning environment and model the school values</li> <li>• <b>team work</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote positive outcomes by valuing the importance of education and liaising with the school on their child's progress/needs</li> <li>• Support their child in their preparedness for the school day and in the provision of a supportive home environment</li> <li>• Monitor their child's school involvement and progress and communicate with the school when necessary</li> <li>• Are informed and supportive of school programs and actively participate in school events/parent groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school will comply with its duty of care obligations and have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that can effectively engage all students</li> <li>• The school will provide appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to have input into their learning and experience success</li> </ul>
<b>Attendance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students are expected to:</li> <li>• attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day that the school is open to students</li> <li>• be prepared to participate fully in lessons</li> <li>• bring a note from their parents/carers explaining an absence/lateness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/Carers are expected to:</li> <li>• ensure that enrolment details are correct</li> <li>• ensure their child attends regularly</li> <li>• advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent</li> <li>• account for all student absences</li> <li>• keep family holidays within scheduled school holidays</li> <li>• Support their child's learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students after prolonged absences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In accordance with DEECD procedures the school will:</li> <li>• Proactively promote regular attendance</li> <li>• mark rolls accurately each lesson and follow up on absences</li> <li>• Identify trends via data analysis</li> <li>• Report attendance data in the school's Annual Report</li> <li>• Support students whose attendance is problematic by developing 'Return to School' plans and working with families to implement individual strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are expected to:</li> <li>• take responsibility for their learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/Carers are expected to :</li> <li>• have high expectations of their child's behavior</li> </ul>	The school will deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviors and emphasises the well being of

	<p>and have high expectations that they can learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take responsibility for their behavior and its impact on others</li> <li>• model the schools core values of diversity, achievement, responsibility and endeavour</li> <li>• comply with the schools Behavioral Policy and work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>and an understanding of the schools behavioral expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with the school in regards to their child’s circumstances</li> <li>• Cooperate with the school by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs</li> </ul>	<p>every child focusing on pro-social behaviors in curriculum content</p> <p>The school will employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioral issues</p> <p>The school will consistently apply its behavioral Policy through a shared collegiate understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances.</p> <p>The school recognises that for some students additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and is committed to working with families to reintegrate students after exclusion</p>
--	---	---	---

## 5. School Action and Consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school classroom practices, including targeted and individualised support when required. (Please refer to our Attendance Policy and Behaviour Policy). Whole school practices include:

- Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- Ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- Providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- Consistently acknowledging all students
- Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities to take responsibility and be involved in decision –making
- Providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be supported 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
- Engaging in “Restorative Practices”

### Broader support strategies will include:

- Involving and supporting the parent/carer
- Involving the Primary Welfare Officer and guidance officer where appropriate
- Mentoring and /or counselling
- Convening student support group meetings
- Developing individualised learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- Providing broader educational programs ( excursions, incursions & camps)
- Involving community support agencies
- Contact with the Regional Office

### Discipline Procedures – suspension and expulsion

A student may 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 which may put the health, safety and well-being of other students, staff or themselves at significant risk.

### Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges
- Use of behaviour and attendance sheets to monitor behaviour
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
- Detention: teachers may require a student to complete school work or additional work or duties at recess or lunch break, or afterschool. No more than half the break time may be given to detention and afterschool detentions will not exceed forty-five minutes. Parents will be informed at least the day prior to the detention and in family circumstances where this would create undue hardship, the school may negotiate an alternative disciplinary measure with parents/carers.
- Convening of a school support group.

When considering suspension or expulsion, the College follows the Department of Early Childhood and Development’s procedures (refer to section 4.3 of Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines).

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	<a href="#">DEECD - Child Health and Wellbeing</a>
Charter of Human Rights	<a href="http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrra2006433/">http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrra2006433/</a>

This policy was last ratified by School Council on ...

8<sup>th</sup> August 2017