STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY

LAUNCHING PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL

2599

Carter Street, Launching Place, 3139

To be read in conjunction with
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
and
School Wide Positive Behaviour Support – Explicit Teaching for Engagement and Learning at Launching Place Primary School

2014

Principal: Narelle Messerle

School Council President: Andrew Smith

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Introduction

Definition

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 extracurricular activities of the school.
- *Emotional engagement* encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.
- *Cognitive engagement* relates to a students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

Rationale

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 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, respectful, supportive and engaging.

Purpose

The policy will relate to and be consistent with the 'Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: *Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'* and the 'School Wide Positive Behaviour Support: *Explicit teaching for engagement and learning at Launching Place Primary School'* document, in areas such as the encouragement of educational achievement and excellence, prevention of absences and inappropriate behaviour. The policy aims to:
- Foster a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive and engaging environment.
- Provide students with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure.
- Provide support for individual students when they begin to disengage from their learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated.
- Provide genuine opportunities for student/parent participation and student/parent voice.
- Build a school environment based on positive behaviours and values.
- Provide prevention (cognitive, behavioural and emotional) and intervention for all students at risk.

School Profile

Launching Place Primary School is located in the Upper Yarra Valley, in the Shire of Yarra Ranges. The school is situated in a residential estate in a semi-rural area. Our community lives in a variety of settings.

There is an older style housing estate in close proximity to the school where many of our families reside. There are also several newer homes on acreages within the school locality, in addition to several larger properties, which are orchards or horse properties. Many children travel from neighbouring townships and beyond by car and bus to attend our school and do not necessarily live in Launching Place. The school maintains an excellent reputation in the wider community for its educational provision and close-knit, supportive school community.

The current enrolment for the school is 276 students. This has continued to grow over the last few years. There is a relatively even gender breakdown across all levels of the school.

Over the past 4 years, the school's Student Family Occupation (SFO) density has ranged from –

2011	2012	2013	2014
0.5841	0.5841	0.5837	0.5685

This indicates that the socio economic position of families at the school remains in the low to medium range. This is indicative of the high number of recipients of the Education Maintenance Allowance and the very low levels of enrolled students from a non-English speaking background.

At present we have six Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) students identified and funded. A total of five Integration Aides support these students. We run Language Support Programs (such as MultiLit), which cater for the students identified as experiencing difficulty with expressive and receptive language. Literacy and Numeracy intervention is supported through the Quicksmart program and small group tuition. Individual Learning Plans are established for selected students across all levels.

The school is student and curriculum focused. It strives for and encourages maximum achievement in all areas of teaching and learning and student wellbeing. Specialist programs include Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and LOTE (Japanese). A variety of extra-curricular programs are offered such as aerobics, orienteering, science club, chess and swimming. Extension Programs offered include University of New South Wales testing. Our programs are constantly evaluated and developed in response to students' needs. Lunchtime Clubs are tailored to students' interests and allow them to choose and participate in structured activities at lunch times.

The school aims for its students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to become active members of the community and develop a passion for learning. It pursues this objective through presenting carefully planned and targeted programs that are designed to meet the needs of all students. We provide social skills programs such as Social Problem Solving, Restorative Practice, Bully Busters and Life Education. Grade 5/6 girls participate in a program called 'Jump Start – Girls Resiliency Program'. A whole school approach to Drug Education (that is age appropriate), is taught throughout the school.

We have focused on monitoring student punctuality and attendance and as a consequence during the year have continued to implement a variety of positive strategies to encourage regular student attendance such as 'It's Not Okay to Be Away' and the whole school morning raffle. This is further addressed in our Annual Implementation Plan.

The school prides itself on providing equal opportunities for all children. Students who are living under difficult circumstances are supported through various initiatives such as our Chaplaincy program.

Whole School Prevention

At Launching Place Primary School our positive school culture is based on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, our leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff and students, is promoted through regular whole staff professional development and professional learning teams. Innovative pedagogy is encouraged and developed with reference to our Metacognition Project and AusVELS.

Initiatives and programs which encourage Student Engagement:

- Restorative Practice, lunchtime clubs and Active After School Care promote pro-social behaviours.
- Student voice is encouraged and developed through Student Leadership initiatives such as Junior School Council and student led assemblies. Other roles of responsibility provide opportunities for students to influence change within the school community.
- The school provides multiple opportunities for proactively engaging parents/carers and the wider community to be involved in the schools programs such as classroom helpers program, School Council and sub-committees, Parents and Friends committee and the Parent Opinion Survey.
- Providing a range of opportunities for students to be involved in the schools programs, such as interschool sports, family maths nights, Education Week, production and the Country Fair.
- Intervening early to identify/respond to individual student needs for social and emotional support.
- Recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students through the Program for Students with Disabilities support program.
- Adaptation of current pedagogical and metacognition knowledge and resources to engage students in meaningful learning experiences.
- Encouraging students to achieve full attendance to maximise their ability to learn and our teachers' ability to teach effectively.
- Whole school approach to Restorative Practices to encourage engagement; build pride, respect and responsibility.

- Development of intensive literacy and numeracy improvement strategies which are implemented as part of the school improvement agenda.
- An embedded Professional Development culture which gives high priority to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented.
- A consistent, whole-school approach to behaviour management, such as using the 'stop' strategy and implementing the pink and green card system into every classroom, including specialist subjects, to promote and reward positive behaviour.
- Our Launch into Learning start-up program runs in the first two weeks of every year. This program focuses on expectations, routine and social behaviours.

MODEL FOR WHOLE SCHOOL VALUES

VALUES	EXPLANATION	EVIDENCE
Respect	*Having regard for yourself and others, lawful and just authority and diversity within Australian society and accepting the right of others to hold different or opposing views.*	• accepting the right of others to hold different views to your own • listening to others without interrupting • obeying school rules • acknowledging the strengths and abilities of peers • affirming cultural diversity within the school community
Resilience	*Dealing with problems in a positive, calm and proactive manner.*	• stopping yourself from getting angry or upset when someone treats you unfairly or when a problem arises • when you are faced with a difficult task you can stop yourself from getting worried • always have a go, be yourself and don't worry what others think
Honesty	*Being consistently trustworthy.*	• trusted to work independently • doing what you say you will do • being a good bystander by accurately reporting incidents
Responsibility	*Being accountable for your individual and community's actions towards yourself, others and the environment.*	• self-discipline • modelling expected behaviours • involvement in strategies to encourage compliance with school rules
Excellence	*Striving for the highest personal achievement in all aspects of schooling and individual and community action, work and life-long learning.*	• reaching personal best performance • maintaining high learning expectations • setting and meeting high standards • persisting through challenges and difficulties in learning

Rights and Responsibilities

Overview
The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) 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 ideals and to consider them when making decisions and delivering services.

Legislation
The following legislation needs to be considered when determining the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community:

1. Equal Opportunity Act 1995.
2. Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.
3. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (in conjunction with DEECD Disability Standards for Education 2005).
4. Education and Training Reform Act 2006.
5. Education Act 1958.

School Policies
The following policies need to be consistently implemented within all sectors of the school community.

POLICIES	
Aerobics	Internet Usage
Anaphylaxis	Investment
Anti-Bullying and Cyber Bullying	Mandatory Reporting
Attendance	Occupational Health and Safety
Complaints and Resolution	Parent Payment
Curriculum	Privacy
Emergency Management	Risk Management
Enrichment	Social Service
Finance and Budget Procedures	Standing Orders
First Aid	Student Engagement and Wellbeing
Fraud	Sunsmart
Headlice	Thinking Curriculum
Homework	Uniform
Internet Banking	

Whole School Rights and Responsibilities

At Launching Place Primary School we expect high standards of student behaviour based on cooperation, mutual respect and responsibility. We promote positive relationships amongst students, parents, staff and the wider community.

Whole School:

Rights	Responsibilities
To be valued and treated with respect	Build positive relationships within the school community
To receive support in difficult situations from the school community	To provide support to each other
To be free of harassment	To ensure others are not harassed

Students:

Rights	Responsibilities
To work and play without distraction	To allow others to work and play in a secure environment To use the STOP strategy To report bullying to an adult
To be treated fairly and courteously	To be polite and well mannered
To learn in a secure environment	To allow others to learn

Staff:

Rights	Responsibilities
To be treated with respect by students, parents and peers	To treat students in a way that develops self-esteem To communicate positively with parents and peers
To expect students to follow the Student Engagement Guidelines	To have a good understanding of the Student Engagement Policy To use logical consequences and restorative practices To provide a Duty of Care to students To keep records of significant disciplinary actions

Parents:

Rights	Responsibilities
To expect that their child will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged	Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials
To be contacted when their child continually disregards the School Engagement Policy or is involved in a major incident	Promote respectful relationships

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Shared Expectations

Launching Place Primary School has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations set out what is an excepted and appropriate behaviour for our school community. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.

Staff Engagement:

Responsibilities

The *School Leadership Team* will:
- uphold the right of every child to receive an education
- ensure the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligations under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation
- identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning, educational and extra-curricular activities and community services that are inclusive and responsive to student needs.

The *Staff* will:
- develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage different learners
- adopt and implement whole school approaches to teaching, learning and student engagement
- deliver curriculum and assessment that challenges and extends students learning
- develop positive relationships with students that promote engagement, wellbeing and learning
- provide opportunities for student voice

Attendance

In compliance with *DEECD School Attendance Guidelines 2014 School Staff* will:
- promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- monitor and follow up on absences.

Behaviour

Launching Place Primary School will support and promote positive behaviours by developing and implementing shared behavioural expectations with the school community through a staged response.

The *School Leadership Team* will:
- lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues
- monitor the profile of behaviour issues at the school and the effectiveness of implemented strategies
- provide professional development for staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours

The *Staff* will:
- use the Student Engagement Policy as a basis for negotiating class-based shared expectations with students
- teach students social competencies through curriculum content and pedagogical approach
- employ behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviours expected from students
- use consistent language and wording when dealing with behaviour across the school
- adopt whole school behaviour management approaches, such as the 'stop' strategy and the green and pink card system
- build a collegiate atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and support each other to reflect on one's own behaviour management approach

Student Engagement:

Responsibilities

All *Students* are expected to:
- respect, value and learn from the differences of others
- have high expectations that they can learn
- reflect on and learn from their own differences.

Attendance - Every Day Counts.

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education. Students learn new things at school every day – missing school puts them behind.
We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each and every day.
If students miss school regularly, they miss out on learning the fundamental skills that will set them up for success in the later years of school. (If students cannot attend, their parent/carer must provide a suitable explanation to the school).

Behaviour

All *Students* will:
- support each other's learning by behaving in a way that is at all times respectful
- be considerate and supportive of others
- demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contributes to a positive school environment that is safe, inclusive and happy
- understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable

Parent/Carer Engagement:

Responsibilities

All *Parents/Carers* are:
- expected to support the school's efforts to educate young people to live in a diverse world by promoting an understanding and appreciation of diversity in the home
- encouraged to actively participate in supporting their child's learning by building a positive relationship with the school
- encouraged to work with the school through attendance at parent-teacher meetings and responding to communications in a timely manner

Attendance

Parents/carers are expected to ensure that enrolment details for their children are correct, that their children attend school regularly and that, when a child is absent from school, parents/carers advise the school as soon as possible.

The main reasons for absence are:

Sickness – There are always times when students need to miss school, such as when they're ill. It's vital that they're only away on the days they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference.

It's vital that holidays are planned during school holidays where possible, and not during the term if it can be avoided.

"Day off" – Think twice before letting your child have a "day off" as they could fall behind their classmates – every day counts.

Truancy – This is when students choose not to go to school without their parent's permission. There can be many reasons for truancy. The best way to address this is for schools and parents to work together.

If you're having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

Behaviour

Parents/carers should understand the schools behavioural expectations and aim to provide a consistent approach that supports their child's learning and engagement in and out of school.

School Actions

Attendance

At Launching Place Primary School, absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of their learning, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult. The following are ways in which we promote school attendance:

- Attendance practices reflect DEECD philosophy (refer toDEECD 'School Attendance Guidelines 2014 - Every Day Counts'.)
- All student absences are recorded twice a day (morning and afternoon) by teachers, are aggregated on to our CASES database and communicated to DEECD *(refer to Appendix 10 & 11: Student Engagement Policy).*
- The school recognises illness as a reasonable ground for an absence.
- Clear written/verbal statements are made regularly to parents/carers/students about school and community attendance expectations.
- The Principal will closely monitor student attendance through the evaluation of student absence reports on CASES21.
- If within three days of the initial absence parents/carers have not provided an explanation/satisfactory explanation, contact will be made by the classroom teacher or nominated representative.
- The Primary Welfare Officer or the Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences/lateness, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences *(refer to Appendix 6: Student Engagement Policy).* A home visit may also be required.
- Ongoing unexplained absences/lateness, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. This may lead to the establishment of a Student Support Group.
- This Support Group will be convened by the Principal (or nominee) and attended by key professionals. An Attendance Improvement Plan may be developed *(refer to Appendix 7: Student Engagement Policy)*. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the Principal to the Department of Human Services.
- Student attendance figures will appear on the student's mid-year and end of year reports and in student portfolios.
- DEECD and enrolment auditors will be given complete access to all student attendance records if requested.
- Whole-school modelling of punctuality is expected and regularly monitored.
- All absence notes and records of communication will be retained and stored at the school for a minimum of seven years.

Behavioural Consequences

1. Students are expected to cooperate.

To promote cooperation a student could choose to:	*Cooperation is difficult when a student:*	*Appropriate responses to minor/initial incidents:*	*Major or repeated incidents:*
• Consider other classmates needs	• Always has to be first	• Speak to child	• Parents contacted
• Think of ways for everyone to have a turn	• Refuses to take turns	• Student to reflect on the incident (student incident report may be completed)	• Withdrawal of privileges, with explanation of how behaviour impacts on self and others
• Encourage everyone to have a say	• Ignores the ideas of others	• Reflection Sheet may allow opportunity for student to take responsibility for actions and repair damage done to people or property	• Behaviour Management Plan

• Student Support Group

• In school suspension. |

2. Students are expected to play safely, show respect, learn, be honest, care and be responsible.

Detention

Teachers may require a student to finish school work, which 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 out of school hours, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes. The principal should ensure that parents are informed at least 24 hours prior to the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of work would create undue hardship, we may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents.

Launching Place Primary School is permitted to detain students but will take into account family circumstances and negotiate with parents where appropriate.

Student Support Group

A Student Support Group may be convened by schools to exchange information and facilitate solutions to behavioural problems or difficulties of students. In general, they will be convened at the school, although they could occur at alternative locations agreed to by the school and parents.

These meetings are to be held at a time suitable both to the school and to the parents. The purpose of procedures for such meetings will vary depending on the needs of individuals and schools, but they promote positive behaviours through a staged response. As well as teachers, parents and the student, the meeting could involve a person requested by the parents, principal or nominee and any support staff who have been involved with the student and/or the student's family or who have particular relevant expertise. If the principal considers it warranted, or the student or the student's parents request, the principal must ensure suitable language interpretation facilities are made available.

A brief written statement including a list of participants and agreed outcomes should be maintained to assist future problem-solving processes at the school. The statement should be verified by the parents and/or student and remain confidential.

3. A student will 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.

Details of suspension and expulsion procedures are discussed below.

<u>*Suspension*</u> *- General information*

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and should normally only be used when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. Suspension should be used for the shortest time necessary. The maximum period of time a student can be suspended consecutively is five school days. 'School days', as referred to in this document, does not include weekends, public holidays or school holidays. A student cannot be suspended for more than fifteen school days in a school year, unless approval is sought from the regional director. However, a student may be suspended for a further period (not exceeding five school days) pending the principal's decision whether to expel a student.

Procedures prior to suspension

With the exception of situations which require an immediate response, principals of schools should ensure that a range of options (and in particular those to accommodate the needs of students with a disability or impairment) has been considered before suspending a student. The student must be informed that suspension is being considered and given an opportunity to address the issues of concern and to respond

positively, unless the principal is satisfied that immediate action (in the form of a suspension or expulsion) is required. When it is believed that a student's behaviour warrants suspension, the principal must ensure that every reasonable step is taken to arrange a meeting with the parent, the student and the student support group to discuss:

- the student's behaviour and performance
- the strategies being developed within the school to meet the educational needs of the student
- the possibility of suspension, should that behaviour continue
- the responsibilities of the parents, should suspension be considered necessary.

The Principal must ensure that:

(a) The behaviour, the educational needs of a student, disability, age of student and the residential or social circumstances of the student has been considered before suspending a pupil.
(b) A pupil is informed that suspension is being considered and is given an opportunity to address the issues of concern and respond positively with a student support group that is consistent with a staged response, unless the principal is satisfied that immediate action (in the form of a suspension or expulsion) is required.
(c) The parent may be accompanied at that meeting by another person.
(d) If it is considered warranted by the pupil or the parent, the principal must ensure that suitable language interpretation facilities are available at the meeting arranged.

Grounds for Suspension

A student may, by order of the principal of a state school, be suspended if, whilst attending school or travelling directly to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travel organised by the school, the student:

(a) Behaves in such a way that threatens or endangers the health, safety and wellbeing of any staff member, student or any person assisting in the conduct of school activities.
(b) Commits an act of significant violence against a person or property or being knowingly involved in the theft of property.
(c) Possesses, uses, or assists another person to use prohibited drugs and substances; or
(d) Fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member.
(e) Consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any student.
(f) Engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person.

Procedures for Suspension

If the strategies outlined in *4.2.2 of the Student Engagement Policy Guidelines* fail to achieve an acceptable change in behaviour and suspension is imposed, the following steps are to be taken:

(1) The principal must provide the parents of the student with a copy of the *Procedures for Suspension* brochure and a notice of suspension *(refer to Appendix 13: Student*

Engagement Policy) on the day on which the suspension commences or within twenty four hours thereof.

(2) The principal shall also provide the president of the school council with a copy of the notice of suspension.

(3) At any time during the suspension of a student the parent can request a suspension conference. The principal may convene a suspension conference at any time, but must convene a suspension conference when a student has been suspended for five continuous school days on any one occasion and when a student has been suspended for a total of fifteen school days in any one school year.
The suspension conference will involve a formal meeting convened by the school principal or nominee. The participants will involve the principal, student support group, parents, student and other key professionals. Conference proceedings must remain confidential.

(4) A suspension conference is to be conducted during the period of the suspension or as soon as practicable thereafter. The period of suspension shall not be extended due to delays in holding a suspension conference.

A suspension conference will consider the educational, welfare and disciplinary strategies in relation to the pupil and will consider other options for meeting the pupil's educational needs.

Period of suspension

The maximum continuous period of time a pupil can be suspended at any one time is five school days. A pupil cannot be suspended for more than fifteen school days in a school year.

The school shall provide appropriate and meaningful school work to the suspended pupil that is in line with classroom coursework.

Expulsion – General Information

The School Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school according to the procedures set out below. This power cannot be delegated to any other person at the school level.

Permanent expulsion from a school is the most extreme sanction open to a Principal. Except in the most unusual and extreme circumstances, it will only be used after all other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in the engagement guidelines have been exhausted *(refer to Appendix 2: Staged Response Checklist: Student Engagement Policy).*

Grounds for Expulsion

A principal may expel a student if:

(a) The student does anything for which they can be suspended (as outlined above).

(b) 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) A comprehensive range of strategies, consistent with a staged response, has been implemented by the school.
(b) Despite these strategies, the student's inappropriate behaviour persists; and
(c) The student and parents/carers are informed that expulsion is being considered and must be given the opportunity to be heard.

Procedures for Expulsion

(1) 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.

(2) The principal must convene a student support group meeting to:
(a) Provide the student and their parents/carers with a Notice of Expulsion *(refer to Appendix 15: Student Engagement Policy)* before the day on which the expulsion commences.
(b) Provide a copy of the Procedures for Expulsion, to the student and their parents/carers.
(c) Identify the future educational options most suited to the students needs.
(d) A principal, within twenty-four hours of the commencement of the expulsion, must forward a copy of the Notice of Expulsion *(refer to Appendix 15: Student Engagement Policy)* to the regional director with a written Expulsion Report *(refer to Appendix 16: Student Engagement Policy).*

Transition Arrangements

If a school expels a student, the school must schedule a meeting with the destination school or registered training organisation of the expelled student.

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 parent/carers with an Expulsion Appeal proforma *(refer to Appendix 18: Student Engagement Policy),* 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.