

# BELMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY



### PURPOSE

To provide a supportive, co-ordinated and consistent approach to the education and wellbeing of children and young people enrolled in our school.

### SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

<b>Environmental</b>	Belmont Primary School was established in 1856, being one of the earliest schools provided in the Geelong area. The school is situated close to the Belmont shopping and business centre and in the centre of the original Belmont suburb. Strong links with many families whose members attended the school in the past have been maintained. A significant sense of history exists within the school and its community.
<b>Social - Community and Demographics</b>	<p>The school enrolment is currently around 295 students. It should be noted that it is the belief of the school council that the school enrolment is close to our maximum in terms of being able to cater for the needs of the children on a relatively small site. Our children are from both the local neighbourhood and wider areas of Geelong, with many families opting to travel in order to have their children attend this school. There are several government, catholic and private sector schools in the area and parents generally visit several schools before making enrolment decisions. The school enrolment increased substantially in recent years with increases at all year levels. An equal number of boys and girls are enrolled.</p> <p>Students attending the school largely come from stable families where one or both parents are employed. The school has a Student Family Occupation around 0.28 The partnership between home and school is very positive with families placing a strong emphasis on education and providing valuable support for the school through School Council, Parents Association and as classroom and special activities helpers. The school also supports families through the provision of a well-run After and Before School Care Program.</p> <p>The staff team varies considerably in age and experience and each member adds something special to the school. A relatively large number of new staff have been employed in recent years as the school has grown and a number of staff have retired, resigned or taken various forms of leave. A high level of teamwork continues to be a feature of the school.</p>
<b>Educational</b>	Currently the school provides a comprehensive education that reflects the Victorian Curriculum. We take great pride in our work and are committed to seeing our children achieve to a high level in all academic areas. Considerable work in recent years has seen the development of a sequential integrated curriculum plan that incorporates all elements of the Victorian Curriculum, with an increasing emphasis on utilising ICT and multi-media in teaching and learning practices. We are also an active member of the Barwon South Network of schools and engage in numerous network activities designed to improve student learning outcomes.

## SCHOOL PURPOSE AND VALUES

### Purpose

Belmont Primary School exists for its children. Within a safe and nurturing learning environment we promote:

- *A love of learning and a thirst for knowledge*
- *All children achieving to their full potential; academically, socially, emotionally, physically and artistically*
- *A highly developed sense of belonging to both school and the community*
- *Confidence, compassion and the ability to get along with and accept others*
- *An ability to successfully function in an ever-changing world.*

### Values

The following values form the basis for all that we do as a school:

- **Respect** – Showing care and consideration for self, others and property. Valuing relationships and treating others as we would like to be treated.
- **Honesty** – Behaving with integrity. Being truthful and trustworthy in all we do.
- **Responsibility** – Being accountable for attitudes, actions and behaviours.
- **Courage** – Showing persistence; doing things that need to be done, even when they are difficult.
- **Learning** – Having enjoyment and showing a love of learning. Showing pride in ourselves and our school doing our best.
- **Community** – Sharing the goal of making our school the best it can be.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. Guiding principles

The school will provide a student-centred, stimulating learning environment which engages students in their learning. The school will:

- collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behaviour management approach
- promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment
- support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners
- promote active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change
- establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress
- have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support
- 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.

### 2. Engagement Strategies

First and foremost, our school proudly promotes a culture in which children are "caught being good" and positive behaviours are then celebrated with pride. This culture is evident on a daily basis in all classrooms and activities in the school and is constantly reinforced by the school's staff and leaders in a variety of ways and in a variety of forums.

This school provides programs, services, information and resources that engage students through:

- modelling the values of learning, a belief that everyone can succeed, pride, responsibility, courage, honesty, respect, persistence, enjoyment / sense of fun, relationships / sense of trust and support:.. (See above) (need to adjust this section according to the final values decided upon by staff)
- providing a safe and supportive environment in which students can learn and grow
- encouraging punctual, regular attendance of all students at school; and
- engaging students cognitively, behaviourally and emotionally.
  - *Cognitive engagement relates to students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation*

- *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. It can be defined as students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.*

This is supported by the following:

- Issues Resolution Policy
- Attendance Strategies
- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Student Welfare Policy and approaches
- Sun-Smart Policy Internet – Correct Usage
- Walk to School Program
- Camps
- Excursions/Incursions
- Drug Education
- Preparation for Puberty
- K-P & 6-7 Transition Programs
- Buddies Program
- Life Education Program

### **3. Identifying students in need of extra support**

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

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- Behaviour observed by classroom teachers
- Engagement with student families

### **4. Reciprocal rights and responsibilities**

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 and to consider them when making decisions and delivering services. The Four Basic Principles include FREEDOM, RESPECT, EQUALITY and DIGNITY. These rights are reflected in our Belmont PS School Values.

### **5. Behaviour expectations**

With rights come responsibilities. As such, all members of the school community including the School Council, Principal, Teachers, Students, Parents, Education Support Staff and Community Members have a responsibility to acknowledge the rights of others and to behave in such a way as to uphold the Belmont PS School Values.

**School actions:**

#### **Responding to challenging behaviour**

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

- 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 for them 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 responded to through a staged response, as outlined in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.***

**This may include some or all of the following:**

- 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.

**Broader support strategies will include:**

- Involving and supporting the parents/carers
- Involving the area leaders or the assistant principal or principal
- 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
- Involving network staff or community support agencies.

**Consequences for inappropriate behaviour may include:**

- Discussion with the student about their behaviour (warning, written or verbal apology, repeating a task)
- 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.

**Discipline**

- Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.
- Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:
  - Restorative approach (eg repairing damage caused)
  - Withdrawal of privileges
  - Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
  - Detention
  - Suspension (in-school and out of school)
  - Expulsion
- Discipline will be applied in a way that is proportionate to the behaviour and upholds procedural fairness
- Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>
- **Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.**

## 6. Engaging with families

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 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:**

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Engagement 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
- involving families in Student Support Groups
- Transition Activities
- Involving Parents in 'Special Days'

## RESOURCES

*Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Sections 2.2.4(1), 2.3.6 (1)(c), 2.2.*

Department of Education and Training *School Policy and Advisory Guide*

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/pages/parentpayments.aspx>

## EVALUATION

### **Data collection and analysis**

Data will be collected regarding frequency and types of wellbeing issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches. Some of sources of data used are:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- School Level Report data
- Parent Opinion Survey data
- data from case management work with students
- data extracted from software such as CASES21 or SOCS

### **Review of this policy**

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

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

**December 2017**

**Review Date: Term 1 2019**