



# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2014

**PRESENTED TO AND RATIFIED BY WWPS COUNCIL MAY 2014**

**The Wodonga West Student Engagement Plan contains the following sections:**

- 1. School Profile Statement**
- 2. Whole School Prevention Statement**
- 3. Rights and responsibilities**
- 4. Shared Expectations**
- 5. School Actions and Consequences**

**Appendices:**

- 1. List of 10 Positive Behaviour Supports**
- 2. List of 10 Vulnerable Learner Supports**
- 3. Relevant Legislation-website listing**
- 4. WWPS Bullying Policy**
- 5. WWPS Attendance Policy**
- 6. WWPS Attendance Strategy 2014**
- 7. Complete list of SWPBS WWPS Behaviour Matrix for all settings**
- 8. Consequences Matrix for SWPS**

# **1. SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT**

## **Physical location**

Wodonga West is the one of four government primary schools in urban Wodonga, a town of 35,000 people. Currently our student population is between 220-250. We are located on the fringe of the Central Business District between both campuses of the Government Middle Years College and within walking distance from the Senior Secondary College. Our Foundation students enrol from a number of preschool settings across the town.

## **Facilities**

We have a modern flexible learning space for students in years Foundation-2 with an adjoining Resource Centre. This is the first part of our Master plan and we are hopeful of having State government funding committed to construct the remainder of the plan in the near future. Currently other year levels are housed in classrooms and some portables.

We also have a large climate controlled Gymnasium, Canteen, Visual and Performing arts studios, ICT lab and Out of School Hours Child care facility. We are recognised in the North East for our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program with a designated Kitchen and extensive Produce patch (featured in Australia's Open Garden Scheme in 2011). This program which commenced in late 2009, is complemented by a Community wood fired oven and Community Parterre Garden.

Our extensive, spacious grounds have previously won us State Garden Awards. We have two large grassed ovals with a fitness track and 4 modular playground pieces. The Community pride in our school is demonstrated by the large number of student art works around our school.

## **Community and Student Connectedness with the school**

Here, at Wodonga West we pride ourselves on providing a comprehensive and engaging curriculum package which encompasses our school vision "Learning for Living". Our committed staff demand high expectations of all and aim to work in partnership with parents whom we acknowledge are our students' first teachers. The school population whilst overwhelmingly, is of white Anglo Saxon descent, is enriched by a number of students where English is their second language and also a growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Our English as Another Language students (EAL) access an EAL teacher and multicultural aide. Our Defence Force Transition aide works to build relationships with our Defence families and ensure that each student is provided with a solid education despite their transiency.

Wodonga West Primary constantly strives to build community connections with our families and the wider community as we embrace the concept of "It takes a Village to raise a Child". Currently the Wodonga Toy Library is housed on our site. We value parent participation in school activities, support for the Home Learning environment and Individual Learning Plans, participation in school bodies such as Parents, Family, Friends Club and School Council and participation in working bees and fund raising initiatives. Our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen and Garden has been an exciting initiative which has welcomed a variety of volunteers from different backgrounds, age groups and experience. Our efforts in this area have been recognised by previous Regional awards.

## SECTION 2: WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT

Our 2012-2015 School Strategic Plan identifies the following Key Improvement strategies under Student Engagement and Wellbeing:

1. Sustain a safe, supportive and engaging school environment
2. Ensure school values/expectations are visible in the daily classroom and playground life
3. Improve connections between the school and its community
4. Achieve staff and community support for a new school wide Behaviour Management system

Our Staff have been committed to School Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPBS) since mid-2012.

Our Statement of Purpose is:

***At Wodonga West Primary School the approach to behaviour is based upon the principles of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support.***

***This means we:***

***TEACH***

***MODEL***

***PRACTISE, PRACTISE, PRACTISE***

***ACKNOWLEDGE AND CORRECT***

***All students, all staff, all settings, all of the time.***

SWPBS is:

- A broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviour with all students
- The redesign of environments to achieve success
- The teaching of specific behaviour expectations, not reacting to problem behaviour
- About what we will do differently to teach children about appropriate social and learning behaviour
- Designing a statement of purpose, behaviour expectations and a behaviour matrix that the whole school uses to teach students about appropriate behaviour
- About looking for and rewarding appropriate and positive behaviour

SWPBS is NOT:

- A behaviour management system
- About punishment or looking for negative behaviours
- Redesigning or changing individuals

SWPBS is driven by:

- Data collected from the classroom and from the yard
- Buy-in from staff, students, families

- Evaluation
- Environmental change
- Effective working systems
- Practise

Our aim is to be consistent and provide a supportive learning environment where all children want to be in an engaging classroom. Students at WWPS will be equipped for life through the teaching and growth of life skills. The development of strong interpersonal skills, will be rewarded with positive relationships, warmth and friendships. The confidence and resilience this fosters, will enrich the belief, that each individual is special: a unique and valued member of our school community.

Being organised, and yet flexible both mentally and physically, will allow the Wodonga West students to tackle academic skills in literacy, numeracy, the arts, and knowledge of the wider world. An environment rich in ICT resources will support the students in their journey. Developing a global knowledge, and an empathy for cultures, will enrich the mind and heart. Students will be well rounded and immersed in all forms of learning. This will lead to an understanding of personal strengths and development of thinking skills, thus empowering the creativity of individuals to face life's challenges.

In an ever changing world, an awareness and passion for the environment will be fostered. Our students will develop healthy minds and bodies through a balance of active, passive and creative activities. Students will achieve success through developing respect, responsibility and cooperation which will allow them to make connections with the world.

(Devised by school staff 2010 and reviewed and reinforced 2014)

***To support the components of student engagement, Wodonga West Primary school boasts a qualified, dedicated teaching staff committed to securing the best possible learning outcomes for all students. The school takes every opportunity to broaden students' experiences. All students are able to participate in an environment which rewards adherence to our school wide expectations. Students are expected to display a commitment to being safe, being a learner and being respectful. We are rigorous in aiming to improve student engagement.***

We do this through:

### **1. The Curriculum**

- Dedicated Literacy and Numeracy blocks using the Regional Literacy and Numeracy placemats from Foundation to Year 6 to ensure students have the necessary academic skills to access broader learning
- Ongoing assessment, fluid groupings and differentiated tasks guided by Learning Intentions and Success Criteria
- Comprehensive Rich Tasks developed to implement the new AusVELS National curriculum which are designed around higher order thinking and technological involvement
- Development of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden to ensure students are able to access life-long skills of healthy living in a pleasurable and real life manner and to utilise real life literacy and numeracy skills
- A Specialist program is offered in The Visual and Performing Arts, and Physical Education
- Programs for Our Middle Years of Schooling (MYOS) students which foster potential pathways through Secondary school. These include "Training for Trades" and "Studio West"
- Investment in technology has been substantial with netbooks and Ipads used in every classroom and access to a dedicated ICT lab with desktop computers. Every classroom has access to an Interactive whiteboard
- Commitment and trained accredited staff to the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program which is a system of organisational and learning strategies to optimise

students' chances of academic and lifelong success. This program is utilised from Foundation to year 6 and flows into Middle Years and Senior Secondary

- Our staff are trained in 'Bluearth'-a wholistic approach to physical activity and well-being
- Our school wide expectations of "Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be a Learner" are explicitly taught reviewed and rewarded, as part of SWPBS. Staff also teach weekly sessions from the "Bounce back" program to enhance student well-being

## **2. Organisation**

Due to cohort numbers classes are multi-age. Student learning occurs at point of individual need based on individualised literacy and numeracy assessments.

- Where possible students in MYOS (years 5/6) stay in the same group and with the same teacher for two years. This philosophy is based on Middle Years research which indicates that students of this age take a longer period of time to develop relationships with adults and peers
- Our day is divided into a timetable which maximises productive learning time in the morning and allows for dedicated 2hr literacy blocks and 1 hour numeracy blocks.
- Our daily teaching timetable is 2 hours, 2 hours and 1 hour. Students are supervised during lunch and snack eating and by yard duty teachers during our two recess breaks outside, each of half hour duration
- Under School Wide Positive Behaviour there is a school wide consistent plan for acknowledging expected behaviours in both non-classroom and classroom settings

## **3. Support Personnel**

- All staff share responsibility for all students and are expected to acknowledge and manage student behaviour
- A full-time Student Wellbeing Officer (Primary Welfare Officer) is employed
- An Attendance Officer is employed and works in conjunction with the Student Wellbeing Officer to monitor student attendance
- The non-teaching Leadership team assume shared responsibility for all intervention actions not manageable at classroom level
- We have access to a SSSO ( social worker) for secondary consultations
- Other Para-Professionals (if available) are outsourced through our Student Services budget
- Educational Support (ES) staff are employed for students funded through the Disabilities and Impairments program
- Part time support staff include: Defence Transition Aide, EAL teacher, Koorie Education Support Officer, Multi- Cultural aide, Student Attendance Officer

## **4. Support Programs/Measures**

Our Student Achievement data is stringently monitored by Leadership and all staff are aware of 'students at risk' academically. Attendance data is also monitored and managed by our Attendance strategy (see appendices) and a daily follow-up on absences occurs to ensure students are at school to maximise learning opportunities. Our programs are designed to support the majority of students but it is acknowledged that there are some programs that are implemented for students with a particular need.

Examples of support programs and measures at Wodonga West are:

- Lunch time activities operated by Student Wellbeing Officer
- Designated areas of the playground for different year levels as well as areas open to all
- Breakfast available to be bought at the canteen
- Supervised library/indoor play program for students requiring yard support
- Buddies for Foundation students and with other classes at teacher discretion
- Student Leadership Council and School Captains
- Policies to address Bullying and Equal Opportunity (see appendices)
- Monitoring and support of students academically and emotionally by Leadership team personnel as well as classroom teachers
- Student Support Group Meetings (SSG's) for students funded for Disabilities and Impairments and for any other students who require extra support
- Individual Behaviour/Learning plans (where applicable)
- Programs operated on a needs basis for students by the Student Wellbeing Officer including 'Seasons for Growth' ( a grief and loss program)
- Referrals to Paediatricians, Para-Professionals, NECAMHS and Community Health services
- Individual counselling/management of students with Student Wellbeing Officer/Leadership team
- Liaison with Community Support Workers, Child First, DHS-where applicable and appropriate
- Access to KEAPs program conducted by NECAMHS (when available)

### Section 3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Wodonga West Primary community is guided by the following principles:

- **All members of our school community have the right to be safe**
- **All members have the right to be treated with respect**
- **All members have the right to be in a secure environment without interference, intimidation, harassment, bullying or disruption to maximise learning opportunities**
- **All members of our school community are expected to be polite, courteous and well mannered**

These principles are aligned with the relevant pieces of legislation including the Equal Opportunity Act 1995, The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, The Disability Standards for Education 2005. (See appendices for further detail)

Our School Community have devised a matrix which identifies the expected behaviours which we teach, model, practise, acknowledge and correct. A full list of these can be located in the appendix but the teaching points for "At School" are featured below.

<b>BE SAFE</b>	<b>KEEP HANDS AND FEET TO YOURSELF</b>
	Personal space
	Choose appropriate places to sit and stand
	Respond to severe incidents by telling a teacher
	<b>MOVE AND PLAY SAFELY</b>
	Walk inside
	Take turns
	Play in designated safe play areas
Only throw equipment designed for throwing	

<b>BE RESPECTFUL</b>	Use equipment safely in designated areas
	Be Sunsmart
	Wrestling, tackling and play fighting is unsafe
	Move around buildings safely
	<b>BE WHERE YOU SHOULD BE</b>
	Adults need to know where you are at all times
	Stay in learning spaces
	Get to your learning space on time and respond to the music and bell
	Stay within school boundaries
	Be where your class should be
	Ask permission to leave the learning space
	<b>CARE FOR PEOPLE AND PROPERTY</b>
	<b>BE A LEARNER</b>
Displays –look, don't touch	
Use kind words and positive body language	
Help others	
Put litter in bins	
Use equipment safely-look after it for others to use	
Tidy Work spaces	
Be Honest	
<b>FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS</b>	
Listen	
Ask if unsure	
Respond politely	
Do what you are asked the first time	
Accept outcomes of your behaviour	
<b>RIGHT WORDS, RIGHT VOICE, RIGHT PLACE</b>	
Speak calmly	
Use manners	
Use a polite tone of voice	
No put downs	
Accept others as they are	
No answering back	
<b>TAKE TURNS AND WORK TOGETHER</b>	
Be cooperative	
Wait your turn	
Demonstrate good sportsmanship	
Follow the rules of the task	
Accept and involve others in your group	
Stay on task	
Listen to other's contributions	
<b>LISTEN, THINK AND DO</b>	
Actively listen to others	
Look at the speaker	
Ask questions	
Think before you act and speak	
Be a problem solver	
Follow teacher instructions	

	Accept other's efforts and responses
	<b>HAVE A GO</b>
	We learn from our mistakes
	Try new things and set goals
	Don't give up, stick at it
	Encourage and support others
	We can get there in different ways
	Be prepared to try again
	<b>DO YOUR BEST</b>
	Set high expectations for yourself and others
	Be organised
	Be on time
	Make appropriate choices
	Reflect upon your efforts and goals
	Celebrate your success

*The above expectations are modelled, taught, practised, acknowledged and corrected and support the following Rights and Responsibilities developed with parent, student and staff input in 2009 and reviewed in 2014 as part of our Student Engagement Policy.*

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<b>STUDENTS HAVE:</b>	<b>STUDENTS NEED:</b>
1. The right to feel safe at school	To stay within the designated areas around the school To obey school rules and follow teacher instructions
2. The right to learn without interference from others	To attend class prepared to learn and not interfere with the learning of others
3. The right to be treated with respect and in a fair and equitable manner free from harassment	To treat others with respect and resolve differences through discussion and compromise and not conflict
4. The right to expect your property to be safe	To take care of your own and other people's property
<b>TEACHERS HAVE:</b>	<b>TEACHERS NEED:</b>
1. The right to be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and cooperation	To ensure they are punctual and prepared for lessons
2. The right to be treated with respect and in a fair and equitable manner free from harassment	To display mutual respect to other staff, parents and students
<b>PARENTS HAVE:</b>	<b>PARENTS NEED:</b>
1. The right to expect that their child will be educated in a safe and secure environment where care, courtesy and respect for others is encouraged	To treat all members of the school community with respect and support teachers in their maintenance of a safe, secure, productive teaching and learning environment. To ensure their child is sent to school, in school uniform, with a healthy lunch and snack and well rested to maximise learning.

## SECTION 4: SHARED EXPECTATIONS

At Wodonga West Primary we strive to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued and cared for and are engaged effectively in their learning and can experience success.

The school has the following expectations of Principals, Teachers and school staff:

- The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any Victorian Government school and all staff are expected to abide by this
- Teachers will demonstrate inclusive teaching practices. This includes building positive relationships, valuing student contributions, embracing differences in thinking, scaffolding and supporting students and developing a culture where it is acceptable for students to make an error as part of their learning
- All staff will actively model and teach the school's behaviour expectations and utilise the agreed classroom and non-classroom plans and collect the ongoing data to frame SWPBS
- Staff will plan together and utilise data and adhere to the Literacy and Numeracy Placemats and Whole School Curriculum document. An hour session per week utilising the wellbeing resource "Bounceback" will be planned by unit teams and delivered by class teachers
- Staff will provide educational programs featuring differentiation for all students
- Staff will develop and provide appropriate, relevant and challenging-curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning
- Student services will be utilised to support students in need
- Staff will inform parents/carers of their child's performance at school and implement the Student Engagement Policy fairly, reasonably and consistently
- Staff will build parent/carer partnerships and liaise with them and community partnerships where relevant to support student achievement and success
- Commitment to addressing bullying including cyberbullying (see appendices)

The school has the following expectations of students:

- Students will, as they move through the school, develop as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth and utilise goal setting and managing resources to achieve these goals
- Students will display our school expectations of Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be a Learner
- Students with the support of parents/carers attend regularly and should participate fully in the school's educational program

The school has the following expectations of parents:

- Parents will work respectfully and cooperatively with the teachers and School Leadership to ensure their child has the best possible opportunity to attain success and flourish within the school environment. Parents will support the school in their management of Duty of Care to all and a safe, engaging and productive teaching and learning environment
- Parents will support specific policies in relation to student safety. Eg: Car park policy and reporting to the office to sign in and sign out students

### **Diversity in the school community:**

The school aims to address diversity through maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community. We aim to employ the "best applicant" and heavily invest in professional development both within and outside of the school setting. Wodonga West proudly has a reputation of being innovative and is known for embracing many new technologies, curriculum initiatives and educational philosophies. Our Staff Leadership group, Student Leadership and School Council consider and respect the diversity of perspectives. We value our staff and students working in teams to create more effective results, increase participation levels and increase our capacity to solve problems.

## Section 5: SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required.

The following protective factors support student engagement:

- Positive behaviour support
- Clear, fair and consistent rules and behavioural expectations
- Understanding of individual student needs
- Accessible staff support
- Positive and supportive parent, teacher and peer relationships
- Feeling safe and valued at school
- Reasonable and consistent consequences
- Some level of academic success

It is acknowledged that a staged response provides a continuum of support for student well-being.

**STAGE ONE: PREVENTION** (Whole school-focussing on all students and staff across all settings)

**STAGE TWO: EARLY INTERVENTION** (Targeted -focussing on responses to problem behaviour in order to aim to reduce it)

**STAGE THREE: INTERVENTION** (Intensive -focussing on the complexity of individual behaviour resistant to primary and secondary prevention efforts)

PRIMARY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	EARLY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	INTERVENTION STRATEGIES
<p><b><u>Across the school</u></b>            *Schoolwide Expectations are modelled, taught, practised and acknowledged by all staff ,all settings, all of the time            *"Bounceback" is the foundation of our wellbeing program and is planned for and taught for one hour per week            *School academic data collection and analysis is available to staff to ensure accurate matching of instruction to individual student needs            *SWPBS is reviewed in relation to behaviour data kept across classroom and non-classroom settings            *Team planning for staff members to ensure similarity in programs in classrooms            *Designated areas of the</p>	<p><b><u>Across the School</u></b>            *team sharing of data and professional discussions to brainstorm support for students experiencing difficulties with curriculum            *Individual learning Plans for 'at risk students'            *Programs conducted by Student Well-being Officer or outside organisations            *Individual behaviour plan- this may include alternative play time, play in a different setting, direction to a lunchtime program, designated play setting and safe play communication book or flexible attendance plan            *secondary consultations with Professionals (paediatrician, speech therapist etc) and SSSO staff (psychologist, social worker)</p>	<p><b><u>Across the school/within the classroom:</u></b>  <i><b>This section refers to approximately 5% of students whose behaviour places them at high risk of disconnecting from school and where previous interventions have been unsuccessful.</b></i>   <i>This stage represents an intensity of strategies listed in the Early Intervention Column but can go beyond this to include an Individual Modified Attendance Plan and/or Individual Modified Education Plan but as a last resort can include suspension or expulsion. Students at this level will have had Student Support Group meetings with a SSSO professional in attendance. A student with 4 suspensions for a school year will automatically have involvement</i></p>

<p>playground for different year levels as well as areas open to all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*School Policies in Student Wellbeing area (eg Bullying)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*mentoring/counselling and/or referrals to Community Support organisations</li> </ul>	<p><i>from a SSSO in Student Support Group Meetings</i></p>
<p><b><u>Within the classroom: (tone)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*fair and democratic classrooms and school environments are established from the beginning of the school year</li> <li>*Classroom behaviour expectations are taught and the Behaviour Matrix guides explicit teaching for all school environments</li> <li>* Classroom routines are decided on, taught, encouraged and reinforced</li> <li>*Classroom positive behaviour recognition and consequences flowchart are displayed and implemented</li> <li>*Active supervision by teachers</li> <li>*Ratio of 6-8 positives to 1 negative adult/student interaction</li> <li>*Consistently acknowledging all students</li> <li>*redirections for minor infrequent behaviour errors</li> <li>*Frequent pre-corrections for chronic errors</li> <li>*Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision making</li> <li>*ensuring classroom space is conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning</li> <li>*engaging and differentiated curriculum</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Within the classroom:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*commitment and adherence to SWPBS strategies including positive recognition and staged response on the Consequences Flowchart (see appendices)</li> <li>*Use of behaviour supports and supports for Vulnerable Learners (see appendices)</li> <li>*staff consultation with a support person from the Principal Class and/or Student Wellbeing Officer</li> <li>*proactive parent communication which may then involve: Student Support Group meetings, Individual Behaviour plan/flowchart, communication books, referrals and outside supports</li> <li>* providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Attendance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*electronic rolls marked by (9:30 and 2:30pm daily (or a hard copy is done and sent to office if this is not possible</li> <li>*a culture of “punctuality” and “Every day, every minute and every second counts “ is modelled and explicitly taught</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Attendance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*immediate follow up of individual student absence and/or lateness</li> <li>*individual student attendance goal setting and data driven attendance improvement plans</li> <li>*parent and/or agency involvement</li> </ul>	<p>See WWPS Attendance Policy and Staged Attendance response (in appendices) for Intervention Strategies</p>

<p>*Benefits of regular and timely school attendance is conveyed to students and the community via the Linkletter</p> <p>* Positive attendance is promoted through schoolwide acknowledgement programs</p> <p>*The State Benchmark and Individual student levels of non-attendance are displayed on Semester reports and commented on (both positively or encouraged to improve for unsatisfactory data) by teacher/ Principal class members</p> <p>*Attendance is monitored daily and followed up by the Attendance Officer/ Student Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>*Attendance Staged Response (see attachments)</p>		
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>*Use of support personnel for programs. Eg:Student Wellbeing Officer and ES staff-lunchtime programs</p> <p>*Canteen to provide breakfast, lunch and snack food for purchase</p> <p>*Monitoring of playground use and playground behaviour data</p>	<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>*Inclusion in Student Wellbeing Officer positive support programs</p> <p>*Involving community support agencies</p> <p>*Working with parents to provide support/assistance</p> <p>*Home visits/phone calls</p> <p>*removal of privileges</p> <p>*Individual plan targeting needs</p>	<p>For students at risk in this area the school (within their capacity) will endeavour to work cooperatively with parents, community and government agencies and outside personnel to support the student and their family</p>

## DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES-SUSPENSION AND EXPLUSION INFORMATION

Ministerial Order No. 625-Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion comes into operation on 1 March 2014. The DEECD website provides further information on the procedures which need to be followed by the School Principal if Suspension or Expulsion is to be considered and it is recognised that these strategies are serious in terms of behaviour management

A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class to another class or non-classroom setting for a specified period of time
- Detention at breaks (school based) or after school with parent permission
- Convening of Student Support Group Meetings (as per Student Engagement Policy Guidelines)

Key changes to this area include:

- Maximum consecutive suspension is 5 days (unless approved by Regional Director)
- Where a student is suspended for 3 days or less the school provides meaningful work
- Where a student is suspended for more than three days, develop a Student Absence Learning Plan and Return to School Plan
- Maximum period of suspension in one year is 15 days without written approval from the Regional Director
- If a student has been suspended for 15 school days in a school year, an expulsion is not the automatic consequence
- Copy of the Procedures for Suspension brochure must be provided to the student and their parent/carer

Grounds for suspension:

A Principal may suspend a student if, whilst attending school or travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school (including travel to or from that activity), the student-

- a) Behaves in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
- b) Causes significant damage to or destruction of property;
- c) Commits or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;
- d) Possesses, uses or sells or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;
- e) Fails to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person
- f) Consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades, or humiliates another person based on age; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status as a carer; physical features, political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sex; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes ; or
- g) Consistently behaves in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student

Expulsion procedures can be accessed through reading Ministerial Order No. 625.

Procedural Fairness:

The person or body against whom an allegation is made must be afforded procedural fairness.

Procedural fairness generally requires that the decision making is based on sound evidence and free from bias, and that the person/body against whom an allegation is made has the right to:

- Be informed about the substance of the allegations against them;
- Be given the opportunity to answer the allegations before a final decision is made

The above points for procedural fairness are used to inform staff protocols when investigating student incidents.

When a decision has been made (and often this involves an appropriate consequence), the parties will be asked if they believe the process has been fair and thorough.

When a parent believes procedural fairness has not been followed, (in relation to their child), it is expected that they refer to the "Shared Expectations" section of the Student Engagement Policy. If this is still a concern then parents are welcome to follow the processes outlined in the "Do you have an Issue?" pamphlet available at the school's front office.

## **APPENDICES:**

### **10 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORTS FOR ALL LEARNERS**

1. Creation of an Ethical code (all students have a right to learn in their own way- modifications such as music, squeeze balls can be used)
2. A ratio of 8:1 positive to negative feedback
3. Softer and closer (an approach to managing students where teachers will talk quietly and get within arm's distance to correct behaviour rather than yell)
4. Broken record (an approach for managing students where the same instruction is repeated until the task or behaviour is performed)
5. Recognition of compliance (eg: 'what a friendly voice you used'-the response differs from empty/general praise)
6. Use of global phrases (eg "in this school we don't swear)
7. Working for a group reward
8. Naming behaviour (eg bullying)

9. Managing change (situation rule) prepare the child for the situation and the situation for the child (Pre-corrections)
10. Reinforcing positive behaviour with home.

Reference: Loretta Giorcelli 2009

### **10 point plan for vulnerable learners in schools**

1. Structure
2. Removal or application of stimulation
3. Student consultation (using students to set the engagement tool-giving students a choice of 3 strategies)
4. Partnership with parents and other persons
5. Medication (if prescribed)
6. Use of a mentor/buddy
7. Professional development for staff
8. Use of “wrap-around” techniques (in SSG meeting)
  - no blame, no shame
  - no past baggage
  - futures orientated
  - solution driven
9. Use of self regulation mantras and music eg: where am I now, where I should be,  
What am I doing, what should I be doing (REF: “Talk to yourself-Geoff Wragg ACER)
10. Use of consistent positive behaviour strategies

## **SUMMARY OF THE RELEVANT ACTS PERTAINING TO RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITY SECTION**

### **Equal Opportunity**

The Equal Opportunity Act 1995 sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age. Under the Act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:

- Age
- Breastfeeding
- Gender identity
- Impairment
- Industrial activity
- Lawful sexual activity
- Marital status
- Parental status or status as carer
- Physical features
- Political belief or activity
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religious belief or activity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes)

### **The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural Rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter
- Respect and promote human rights

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance website.

## **Students with disabilities**

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those for the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about

- The nature of the student's disability
- His or her preferred adjustment
- Any adjustments that have been provided previously
- Any recommended or alternative adjustments

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- Costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- Costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcome for the student, other students and teachers
- Benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- Any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

*Summary of Acts provided by VSPA draft Student Engagement and Well Being Policy guidelines.*

*Further information can be found at:*

Charter of Human Rights [www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm)

Equal Opportunity Act [www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoact.htm](http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoact.htm)

Education and Training Reform Act [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm)

VIT Teacher Code of Conduct [www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543) Code-of-conduct-June-2008-pdf

Engaging Schools are Effective Schools  
[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/sepolicy.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/sepolicy.pdf)

Disability Standards for Education  
[www.education.vic.gov/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm)

School Accountability and Improvement  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm)

