

KILLARA PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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

2010

KILLARA PRIMARY SCHOOL
Phillip Drive, Sunbury 3429
PO Box 629 Sunbury 3429
Telephone 9744 6432
Fax 9744 4956
Email: killara.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
ABN. 30 621 474 323

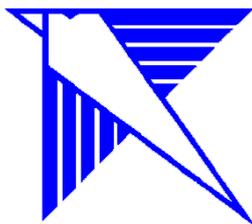


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. POLICY	Pages 3-4
2. SCHOOL PROFILE	Pages 5-6
3. WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION	Page 7
4. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	Pages 8-9
5. SHARED EXPECTATIONS	Pages 10-11
6. SCHOOL ACTIONS	Pages 12-13
7. REFERENCES / REVIEW	Page 14



Killara Primary School Student Engagement Policy

Rationale:

At Killara Primary School we believe in promoting a positive school culture, based on positive behaviours and values, that seeks to increase student wellbeing and learning. We understand that student wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and that social and emotional wellbeing underpin effective student learning and positive behaviour. Killara is an engaging and inclusive school where tolerance and respect are core values of the school's philosophy.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to encourage educational achievement and excellence, build individual self-esteem, foster connectedness to others and prevent absences and inappropriate behaviour. It is also to recognise and have a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of the whole-school community, to emphasise prevention and early involvement to stop negative behaviour and to identify and support students who may be at risk.

Description:

1. Ensure that students feel valued and cared for.
2. Provide meaningful opportunities for students to contribute to the school and to effectively engage in learning.
3. Promote a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment.
4. Develop successful partnerships with parents/carers and families.

Implementation:

- 1 *Ensure that students feel valued and cared for.*
 - 1.1. Teachers should recognise students as individuals, not just as learners.
 - 1.2. Exhibit positive relationships and value diversity to encourage students to take personal responsibility for participation in their education and enable them to provide support and model positive behaviours to other students.
 - 1.3. Set clear expectations of individual responsibility and foster positive relationships among students (see VELS learning domain Physical, Personal and Social Learning).
- 2 *Provide meaningful opportunities for students to contribute to the school and to effectively engage in learning.*
 - 2.1 Foster a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment through engagement.
 - 2.2 Teachers should have high expectations of learning for their students, seek feedback from students and "give out two messages to every child – 'you can succeed' and 'I will help you do that'."
 - 2.3 Engage each student in meaningful learning experiences by adapting pedagogical knowledge and thinking and applying it in different ways.

- 2.4 Involve students in decisions about what and how they learn, and how their learning is assessed.
- 2.5 Provide prevention (cognitive, behavioural and emotional) and intervention for all students at risk.
- 2.6 Employ processes to identify and intervene early when an individual student is at risk of disengaging from learning or from school i.e. students displaying inappropriate coping skills, stress reactions, depressive symptoms and other personal and social vulnerabilities.
- 2.7 Address poor school attendance and inappropriate behaviour to prevent the chances of young people developing health and behaviour problems.

3 *Provide a safe and supportive school environment.*

- 3.1 Provide students with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure.
- 3.2 Implement fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management systems by dealing with issues through Restorative Practices, using logical consequences and by looking to rebuild relationships.
- 3.3 Intervention in incidents involving bullying includes both bully and victim offered counselling and support as deemed necessary.
- 3.4 Transition programs and practices should develop a readiness to enter their new environment, and make successful transitions between year levels.

4 *Develop successful partnerships with parents/carers and families.*

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 Conduct effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.
- 4.3 Provide genuine opportunities for student/parent participation and student/parent voice.
- 4.4 Make the policy available to all members of the school community and publicise excerpts regularly to maintain awareness of the components of engagement..

Definitions

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

Behavioural Engagement refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular 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.

Cognitive Engagement relates to students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

Section 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

VISION: OUR BEST, EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY

MISSION: At Killara Primary School we recognise the extraordinary responsibility and privilege it is to educate our students. All students deserve the right to the best possible education and to achieve their highest potential every day.

- We always aim to demonstrate a high standard of professional and ethical practice by displaying qualities such as dedication, enthusiasm, honesty and respect
- We consistently design and deliver innovative and inclusive curriculum that supports the needs, abilities, strengths and talents of each individual child
- We support and encourage each child's emotional, physical, social and cognitive/academic needs, taking into consideration each child's interests, talents, abilities and aspirations and hold personal contact and connection with every child as an every-day aspiration
- Our school community (teachers, students and parents) creates a safe, engaging, stimulating, challenging and positive learning environment that promotes learning as an ongoing exploration of our world in an interesting way that encourages risk taking
- We constantly strive to adopt best practice by keeping informed of initiatives, educational theory, research and learning and teaching strategies, and by always adopting reflective practices utilising student learning data and multiple forms of feedback. We are committed to establishing a professional learning community that models life-long learning
- The Killara Primary School community works together as a team to ensure the needs of all students are addressed and that our school is held in esteem with our community and beyond

VALUES: "Killara CARES": Caring, Acceptance, Responsibility, Excellence, Support and teamwork

Killara Primary School opened in 1993 in a rapidly expanding area of housing on the northwest fringe of Sunbury. The school has extensive grounds and the core building comprises 10 general purpose classrooms and specialist teaching areas including a music room, art room, library and a small gymnasium. We also have a freestanding block of 6 general purpose rooms as well as 6 relocatable classrooms. Our buildings are in good condition, our grounds are well maintained and all programs are well-resourced.

At Killara Primary School we work cooperatively and collaboratively, with a strong emphasis on team work, to ensure effective student learning, administration, policies and programs. We are committed to empowering individuals to make a difference to the quality of their lives and to the aspirations of their community. Great emphasis is placed on the development of literate and numerate children who have a real joy for learning.

The school reached its peak enrolment of 640 students in 2000 and since then the student population has been slowly declining with projections indicating the school will have approximately 476 students in 2010. The school Student Family Occupation (SFO) index is 0.4158 which makes it less dense than the statewide median SFO density for mainstream schools which is 0.4980 with 1% of the students coming from Non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB). Over 19% of the school families are in receipt of

government assistance through the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). At present we have 7 students on the Program for Students with Disabilities identified and funded. A total of 3 Integration Aides support these students. We have Reading Recovery support for students identified as experiencing difficulty from the Year One cohort.

The school is student and curriculum focussed. It strives for and encourages maximum achievement in all areas of teaching and learning and student wellbeing. Specialist programs include Performing Arts, Physical Education and Visual Arts.

The school aims for its students to develop as enthusiastic, dedicated, honest and respectful citizens. 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 'You Can Do It' and a whole school approach to drug education that is age and developmentally appropriate.

We have monitored student attendance and include information on each student's report regarding number of days absent. Classroom teachers are asked to alert the Principal Class Team of unexplained absences and contact is made if students are away for more than two days in succession. Strategies to encourage regular attendance such as 'It's Not Okay to Be Away' and reminders at assemblies of the need to attend school consistently to achieve are being implemented.

The school will be focussing on maintaining and further developing a safe, engaging, stimulating, challenging and positive school environment.

Section 2: WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION

At Killara our positive school culture is predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, our School Improvement 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 teaching teams and professional learning teams that encourage innovative pedagogy developed using the Department's E5 instructional model and VELs.

Opportunities that contribute to the school and effectively engage students in their learning are:

- Pro-social behaviours are promoted through programs such as: You Can Do It
- Parent/Teacher Interviews provide opportunities for communication about students, to discuss achievements and set new/modified goals for the coming semester.
- Student Leadership programs such as: Parliament, Class Captains, HEROs and other roles of responsibility provide opportunities for students to influence change within the school community.
- Student voice is encouraged through the use of thinking tools such as: PMI, Thinking Hats and Self Evaluations twice a year. Student Opinion Survey results are also considered and results acted upon where relevant.
- The school provides multiple opportunities for proactively engaging parents/carers and the wider community to be involved in the school's programs such as School Council and Parents and Friends Association.
- Intervening early to identify/respond to student needs for social and emotional support.
- Providing a range of opportunities for students to be involved and feel connected to the community.
- Recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students through the Program for Students with Disabilities Support program.
- Adaption of current pedagogical knowledge and thinking to engage students in meaningful learning experiences.
- Students are encouraged to achieve full attendance to maximise their ability to learn and our teachers' ability to teach effectively.
- Development of intensive literacy and numeracy improvement strategies implemented as part of the school improvement agenda and in response to the changing demographics.
- Professional learning is given high priority to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented.

Section 3: 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 following legislation needs to be considered when determining rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community:

1. Equal Opportunity Act 1995

Bullying and harassment

Definitions

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings)

Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:

- teasing and being made fun of
- spreading of rumours online
- sending unwanted messages
- defamation.

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

2. 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, and
- Respect and promote human rights

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

3. *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (in conjunction with DEECD Disability Standards for Education 2005)

4. *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*

5. *Education Act 195*

At Killara Primary School we expect high standards of student behaviour based on cooperation, mutual responsibility and self discipline. We promote positive, non-discriminatory relationships among students, parents, staff and the wider community.

Whole School Rights and Responsibilities:

Students and Teachers

RIGHTS

- Students and teachers have the right to do as much work as possible
- Students and teachers have the right to be safe and comfortable in the classroom and outside

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Personal Responsibility (*I do the right thing*)
- Communal Responsibility (*I encourage others to do the right thing*)

Parents

RIGHTS

- 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
- To be contacted when their child continually disregards the School Engagement Policy or is involved in a major incident

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials and attitude
- Promote respectful relationships

Section 4: SHARED EXPECTATIONS

Killara has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive in that they set out what is expected and appropriate behaviours 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

The school leadership team will:

- uphold the rights of every child
- ensure a safe orderly and comfortable learning environment and uphold the principles of duty of care including Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Legislation
- promote and develop a learning culture that caters for the needs of every child by identifying diversity and delivering teaching and learning, educational and extra-curricular activities and community services inclusively

The staff will:

- develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage different learners
- provide a safe and caring environment and challenging comprehensive curriculum
- 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 developing a positive school culture

Attendance

In compliance with Departmental procedures school staff will:

- promote regular attendance with all members of the school community and;
- monitor and follow up on absences

Behaviour

Killara 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 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
- 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

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

All students are expected to come to school every school day throughout the year. (If students cannot attend their parents/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 curious and respectful
- have high expectations that they can learn
- 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

Parents/Carers Engagement

- 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
- parents/carers should also help the school to provide student-centred responses by providing all relevant information to the school
- parents/carers are encouraged to actively participate in supporting their child's learning by building a positive relationship with the school
- parents/carers will 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.

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.

Section 5: SCHOOL ACTIONS

Attendance

At Killara 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 of 'It's Not OK to be Away'.
- All student absences/lateness 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
- Teachers will closely monitor student attendance
- A database will be utilised to identify students who are at risk of poor attendance and possible disengagement from school.
- 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 professional responsible for Welfare or the Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of explained or unapproved absences/lateness, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences (refer to [Appendix 6: Student Engagement Policy](#)).
- 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.
- 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 period of 24 months.

Students are expected to play safely, show respect, learn, be honest, care, be responsible and co-operate. If these expectations are breached some or all of the following procedures may be activated in the form of a staged response:

Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in **Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines** . Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures.

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:

- Logical consequences related to the indiscretion which has occurred
- 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 (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

REFERENCES

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf

REVIEW

Link to strategic planning process to ensure that school strategic and annual implementation plans continue to reflect changing approaches to student engagement, attendance and positive behaviour.

Ratified : 2010 Possible review: 2012
--