

# Greythorn Primary School

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION POLICY



*~ Working Together ~*

This policy reflects  
the DET *Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance*  
and was produced in consultation  
with the school community

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# ***Greythorn Primary School Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy***

## **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.

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

**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.

## **Rationale**

The Department of Education and Training (DET) is committed to providing safe, secure and high quality learning and development opportunities for every student in all Victorian schools.

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 and respectful to engage and support their learning.

## **Purpose**

To relate to and be consistent with the *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*, in areas such as:

- the encouragement of educational achievement and excellence
- the prevention of absences and inappropriate behaviour
- fostering a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment
- providing students with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure
- providing support for individual circumstances when a student begins to disengage from their learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated
- maximising student learning opportunities and performance
- providing genuine opportunities for student/parent(s)/carer(s) participation and student/parent voice

- building a school environment based on positive behaviours and values
- providing cognitive, behavioural and emotional prevention and intervention for all students at risk of falling behind in their learning.

### 1. School profile:

**Greythorn Primary School, *working together* with its community seeks to optimize the potential of each child, as they grow to become life-long learners, who are confident, responsible citizens with a sense of connectedness, purpose and zest for life.**

The future of Greythorn Primary School is centered upon the idea of a connected school in a global community. Our pedagogical focus is to develop a student-centered learning experience, with new facilities that will serve as a catalyst for further change with teachers adopting new strategies, to support this type of learning environment, with appropriate resources to allow for greater connection of students with the wider world.

In a society in which education has focused on transmitting "what we know," it is a challenge to develop a widespread view that "how we come to know" is very important in modern society.

In a typical classroom at Greythorn the constructivist view of learning will point toward a number of different teaching practices. Students will be encouraged to use active techniques (experiments, real-world problem solving) to create more knowledge and then to reflect on and talk about what they are doing and how their understanding is changing. The teacher will make sure he/she understands the students' pre-existing conceptions and will guide the activity to address these and then build on them.

Teachers at Greythorn will encourage students to constantly assess how the activity is helping them gain understanding. By questioning themselves and their strategies, students in the constructivist classroom ideally become "expert learners." This gives them ever-broadening tools to keep learning. With a well-planned classroom environment, the students learn HOW TO LEARN.

We believe that all students will learn and grow in self-confidence and esteem as a result of:

- becoming motivated, self-extending, independent, life-long learners
- achieving mastery of the curriculum
- acquiring decision making, problem solving and critical thinking skills (initiative)
- working together effectively as part of a team

## **2. Our school values, philosophy and vision**

### **Our values:**

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

Our school is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Please see our *Student Bullying and Harassment Policy* for more information.

### **Our philosophy:**

*Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.*

### **Our vision:**

*All students are confident, curious learners who feel supported and able to meet the challenges at school and beyond.*

*The school's motto **working together** reflects our core values of **pride, optimism, respect** and **integrity**.*

- **Pride** - Recognising and celebrating your personal achievements, and the personal achievements of others.
- **Optimism** - Focusing on positive, rewarding and enjoyable daily experiences.
- **Respect** - Caring about yourself, others and the things in your environment.
- **Integrity** - Being honest and fair.

### **Environmental Context:**

Greythorn Primary School serves the educational needs of families in the area of North Balwyn. The school opened in 1953 and occupies a site of just over two hectares with sweeping views to the city.

The 2016 enrolment of 572 students is accommodated in 26 fully air-conditioned classrooms, a resource centre/library, a multi-purpose hall, a gym, a well-equipped art room, a Languages - French facility, a discovery centre, extensive outdoor play areas and adventure playground and an Out of Hours Care Program. Classrooms are also resourced with Netbooks, iPads, digital cameras and every classroom is equipped with digital screens which are either projected onto whiteboards or allow for interactive screens.

All staff plan together using an Inquiry Learning approach to facilitate authentic and relevant learning opportunities for our students.

The school's belief in strong parent-school partnerships enables parents to participate in all aspects of school life. This partnership promotes a cooperative school culture, where a spirit of mutual respect is evident. This is evidenced by our parent helper programs, PFA and working bees. Parent and community participation complements and extends the quality programs provided by the staff.

A statement about the rights and responsibilities of all students and school staff is included at **Appendix 1**.

### **3. Guiding principles**

- The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behaviour management approach.
- The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change.
- The school provides social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The school has processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

### **4. Engagement Strategies**

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will continue to develop strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

The school works collaboratively with students and parents/carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

The universal (whole-school), targeted (group-specific) and individual engagement strategies used in our school are outlined in our school's strategic plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

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

Our school utilises a range of information and tools to identify students in need of extra support. These can include the following:

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- Behaviour observed by classroom teachers
- Student Mapping Tool
- Engagement with students' families
- Referral to the school Psychologist, Speech Pathologist and other paraprofessionals where needed.

## **6. Behavioural expectations**

Shared behaviour expectations for students, parents/carers and school staff are detailed in a number of documents such as the Student Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use of Technologies Agreement, Student Bullying and Harassment policy, Victorian Institute of Teaching Professional Code of Conduct, as well as the strong links in our strategic plan and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP).

## **7. School actions**

### **Responding to challenging behaviour**

Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, we will institute a staged response, as outlined in the *Department of Education and Training Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance*.

## **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 (e.g. 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.

**Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the School under any circumstances.**

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be applied when the grounds for suspension and expulsion set out in the *Engagement and Inclusion Guidance* have been met.

Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the principal and our school will follow the processes for applying these disciplinary measures set out in the *Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance*.

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that our school will follow are available here:

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

## **8. 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 and associated bodies e.g. Education Sub-Committee. The School Council provides financial assistance and encouragement to the Parents' Association in our efforts to build a strong sense of community.

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 and Inclusion Policy*
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications e.g. weekly newsletters, online Compass manager
- 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

Parents/carers are expected to act in a respectful and constructive manner when dealing with our school. More detail on parent responsibilities and consequences for inappropriate behaviour are outlined in **Our Values** (above).

## **9. Evaluation**

### **Data collection and analysis**

Data is collected regarding frequency and types of wellbeing issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some sources of data that we use include:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- school level report data
- parent survey data
- data from case management work with students
- data extracted from DET software such as CASES21 or SOCS (Student Online Case System).

### **Review of this policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually or when necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

## **10. Appendices and Related Policies**

Appendix 1: Statement of Rights and Responsibilities

This policy is informed by the *Department of Education and Training Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance* available at

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

Related policies: *Greythorn Primary School Student Bullying and Harassment Policy*

## Appendix 1

### STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the right of all members of the school community to experience a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment. Staff, students and parents/carers have a right to be treated with respect, and enjoy an environment free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation. (Refer to our Student Bullying and Harassment Policy).

Teachers also have the rights to be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student.

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

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

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

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