



Student Engagement & Well-Being Policy

**Produced in consultation
with the school community**

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

Semester 1, 2010

**Principal: Richard Kelly
School Council President: Deanne Sykes**

Table of contents

1 SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT	3
2 WHOLE-SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT	3
3 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
4. SHARED EXPECTATIONS	8
5. SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES	9
REFERENCES	12

1 School profile statement

Longford Primary School is in a rural setting outside the City of Sale. It has an enrolment of 132 students who come from a range of family backgrounds and occupations. The school's underlying values are to encourage every student to achieve to the best of their ability, to feel a sense of worth and success, and to develop a lifelong love of learning. This is under-pinned by providing an attractive, safe and stimulating learning environment.

Our programs and assessment schedules, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy, are designed to cater for individual needs and plot individual progress from Prep through to Grade 6. This has been complemented through the work currently being done with Patrick Griffin and staff from Melbourne University. The school is part of the local Innovations and Excellence cluster (Middle Years) from which strategies and activities, such as "Kidsville", have been implemented to enhance student learning and engagement.

There is a strong partnership between parents and staff, with a high level of parent support and participation in School Council and Junior School Council, as classroom and sport helpers, and a very pro-active Parents' Club who organise fundraising and social activities.

2 Whole-school prevention statement

Longford Primary School strives to provide a friendly, caring and safe environment that:

- Maximises learning, personal growth and wellbeing for all students.
- Creates a stimulating and supportive environment for all teachers.
- Assists, informs and involves all parents.

The school's purpose is based on the vision of providing a stimulating environment that allows students to achieve their full potential by promoting an education of real value that produces proud, engaged students who are skilled, flexible, responsible, resilient and creative.

The following values underpin the life of our school and how ALL members of the school community should conduct themselves:

- **Integrity** – in all of our actions being honest, fair, responsible and loyal.
- **Respect** – by treating others and the environment with care, consideration and regard.
- **Responsibility** – by being accountable for one's own actions and learning.
- **Excellence** – in striving to achieve one's personal best in all that they do, and acknowledgement of such.

The school's code of behaviour and whole-school behaviour management strategy retains the focus on respect for people, for property and for learning in our classrooms. Each student is aware that bullying and intolerance are not accepted at this school and that good manners and hard work are encouraged. A feature of this is the weekly recognition and presentation of "Longford Achievers" certificates at assembly that acknowledge success in all areas of achievement.

While overall student attendance approximates the State average, we consider this to be an area where we need to further improve. Attendance data reveals substantial absence due to family holidays and notified illness. On the Attitudes to School Survey, our Year 5 and 6 students' sense of belonging and connectedness to school was just below the State median in 2009, but above the State median as a four year average. The change in student cohorts and teaching staff makes this an area for ongoing monitoring and appraisal.

3 Rights and responsibilities

3.1 Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

3.2 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).

3.3 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 [javascript:void\(0\)](#);
- 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.

3.4 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 of 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 outcomes 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.

3.5 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.

The effects of harassment or bullying include

- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable. Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Subtle: (The most common)

They include:

- Offensive staring and leering.
- Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference.
- Racist or smutty comments or jokes.
- Questions about another's sexual activity.
- Persistent comments about a person's private life or family.
- Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body.
- Offensive name calling.

Explicit: (obvious)

They include:

- Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc.
- Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing.
- Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal.
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail.
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks.
- Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography.
- Requests for sexual favours.

Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

Bullying can involve such things as

- grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving.
- publicly excluding a person from your group
- taking or breaking a person's property
- knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- teasing a person because of their looks

Cyberbullying

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:

- the language you use and the things you say
- how you treat others
- respecting people's property (eg copyright)
- visiting appropriate places.

Behaving safely online means:

- protecting your own privacy and personal information (we used to call it 'stranger danger')

- selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- being proactive in letting someone know if there is something 'not quite right'. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher.

If you are being harassed or bullied you should:

- Tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that you feel comfortable with.

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

The children of today are facing a future of rapid change and considerable uncertainty. This will call for strength of character and well developed skills in interpersonal relationships and ability to cope with change. Independence in living and learning requires a child to take responsibility for his/her own efforts and progress in learning. Mutual respect for one another and self respect grow from, and promote, this sense of responsibility - it is the demonstration of our own self-discipline. The development of self discipline is the all-important link in the development of the child into a fully responsible adult. Self discipline has to be learnt, and Longford Primary School's Code of Behaviour is a response to this important aspect of education. The basic tenet of the code is that everyone has the right to work and play in safety and without disturbance from others. By developing and agreeing to this Code of Behaviour, Longford children, parents and teachers have accepted responsibility for their own behaviour. Teachers and parents must do all that they can to help our children to live and learn by this code - to adopt a positive attitude to a commitment to the code and to accept responsibility for an infringement of the code.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be an individual and to be treated with respect and kindness. • express your ideas and feelings in a responsible manner. • benefit fully from school. • feel safe at school. • a healthy body and a healthy school environment. • tell your side of the story if you are accused of rule-breaking. • expect your property to be safe. 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • treat others with respect and kindness. • allow others to express their opinions - to show tolerance and respect. • complete work and to allow others to work without interference. • learn and obey all school rules. • practise good health habits. • be honest and truthful about your own behaviour. • take care of your own and other people's property.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Parents/carers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be informed of their child's social, 	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be in regular communication with the

<p>behavioural and academic progress at school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have access to the Principal and Class Teachers to discuss matters concerning their child’s progress at school. • expect that their child receives a “fair go” in relation to discipline and educational programs. • expect that their child’s “rights” are respected by other children at the school. 	<p>school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their child’s regular attendance • respect teacher’s timetables by avoiding unnecessary interruptions. • encourage their child to obey school rules and have a positive attitude toward school. • encourage their child to respect the “rights” of others and have tolerance of different values and beliefs.
--	--

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach and meet the learning needs of all. • be free from disruption while teaching. • monitor acceptable student behaviour. • have support from students, teachers and the school community. • draw on their expertise and professional judgement. 	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. • plan, provide and teach at appropriate levels. • react to positive behaviours. • deal assertively and effectively with problems. • gain respect, be a model, set standards. • communicate academic, social and behavioural progress to parents.

4. Shared expectations

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

The school’s values are based on the Australian Government’s nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

- **Care and Compassion**
Care for self and others
- **Integrity**
Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- **Doing Your Best**
Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
- **Respect**
Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person’s point of view

- **Fair Go**
Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- **Responsibility**
Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
- **Freedom**
Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
- **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion**
Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others
- **Honesty and Trustworthiness**
Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

School expectations include:

- inclusive teaching practices
- accessible educational provision for all students
- parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- provision of appropriate student services
- development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

Diversity in the school community

The school aims to address diversity by:

- maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
- attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

5. School actions and consequences

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 wholeschool 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, including:

- 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 student wellbeing coordinator, managed individual pathways or careers coordinators
- 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
- providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, work education, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving community support agencies.

Classroom expectations and consequences

Each grade/class forms its own rules for behaviour, along school guidelines, which are displayed in the classroom. Children who behave according to the rules or go beyond the rules to help in the smooth running of the class will be rewarded. This is done on an individual basis as well as a whole class. Rewards may include acknowledgement by certificates presented at whole school assemblies, stickers, points towards casual dress/class party, etc.

If the code of behaviour is breached, a graded series of sanctions will be implemented:

- Warning
- Time out from activity
- Replacement or payment for damaged items.
- Withdrawal from class to another classroom.
- Detention - misconduct form sent home.
- Sent to Principals' Office – phone home.
- Removal of privileges - sports teams, camps.
- Parents interviews/ discussion with Principal.
- Suspension
- Referral to Counselling Agencies
- Expulsion in line with D.E.&E.C.D. Guidelines.

Yard expectations and consequences

1. Follow teacher/adult direction.
2. Play sensibly and safely.
3. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
4. No bullying, teasing, swearing or name calling.
5. No stealing or damaging property.

Positive recognition of good playground behaviour will be in the form of raffle tickets drawn at assembly, extended play time each fortnight, and an end of term and end of year reward for students who haven't had their name in the yard duty book three or more times for the term/year.

If the code of behaviour is breached, a graded series of sanctions will be implemented and recorded in the Yard Duty book:

1st time - warning (miss out on fortnight extra play)

2nd time - time out / walking with teacher (miss out on fortnight extra play)

3rd time - recess / lunchtime detention (miss out on fortnight/end of term extra play)

Severe Clause – immediate detention for:

- **Breaking Rule 1**
- **Fighting**
- **Vandalism**
- **Dangerous behaviour such as dangerous use of sticks, rocks, etc.**

SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS FOR SPECIFIC AREAS

- **1. Open Spaces**
Open spaces are for ball games and running games. Be aware of others using the area.
- **2. Climbing Equipment**
Use climbing equipment safely. Share and take turns. No sports equipment or running games allowed in these areas. No blocking slides.
- **3. The Quadrangle**
The quadrangle is the eating area. Put litter in bins. Ball games allowed in specified areas. Skipping area. No running. No kicking balls.
- **4. Food**
Eating food is restricted to the quadrangle area.
- **5. The Canteen**
At the canteen, wait your turn quietly in the queue. Speak politely.
- **6. Bike Stand/Staff Car Park**
These areas are out of bounds during school hours. Access to bikes is only before and after school hours. Bikes are not to be ridden on school grounds and walked to designated exit points.
- **7. Assembly**
Be on time. Listen to and look at the person speaking. Stand still. Place all equipment at your feet. If late, wait at the side or back of assembly (within hearing) or otherwise directed to move in. Remove hat and join in singing the National Anthem on Monday mornings.
- **8. Class Line Up**
Begin to line up during the music. Form straight lines. Quieten down. Listen attentively. Walk into class sensibly.
- **9. Toilets**
Use toilets sensibly and help keep them clean. No food, sports equipment or toys to be taken into the toilets. No playing in the toilets. No climbing over walls or standing on toilets/roll holders. Only lock toilet doors when in use. Turn taps off.
- **10. Drinking Taps**
Use sensibly. Take care of taps. Wait your turn. No squirting water.

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:

- 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/learningsupportservices/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