

STUDENTS ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2010

Introduction

Definition:

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 and measures a students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school. **Cognitive engagement** relates to a students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

RATIONALE:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to providing safe, secure and high quality learning and development opportunities for every student in all Victorian schools. These 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, prevention of absences and inappropriate behaviour:-

- To foster a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment through engagement
- To provide students with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure
- To provide 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
- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance through engagement
- To provide genuine opportunities for student/parent participation and student/parent voice
- To build a school environment based on positive behaviours and values
- To provide prevention (cognitive, behavioural and emotional) and intervention for all students at risk

Section 1: School profile

Pascoe Vale North Primary School is in a developed area in Melbourne's northern suburbs and located in the city of Moreland. The original school building has been demolished and replaced with new buildings and some portables. In 2010, the current enrolment is 342 with 14 classrooms. It is expected that PVN will increase its current enrolment level over the next year to 16 classes.

The school is a multicultural community, including 8 ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students. Over the past 3 years we have had a slight decrease in the number of first phase ESL students however there is still a large need to provide Literacy Assistance / Oral language programs for our students. Pascoe Vale North Primary School has a number of economically disadvantaged students with approximately 142 of our families entitled to receive Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA). We have a number of students who travel from the surrounding suburbs to attend. At present we have 18 students on the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) identified and funded. A total of 10 Integration Aides support these students. We run Language Support / Literacy Assistance Programs which cater for the students identified as experiencing difficulty with expressive and receptive language.

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 including Art, Music and Information Communication Technology, and a variety of extra-curricular programs are offered. Extension and intervention programs are implemented at our school. These are evaluated and developed in response to students needs.

The school aims for its students to develop as honest, independent citizens who make their contributions to society. 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 the You Can Do It Program and when possible Circles of Support. Drug Education is taught throughout the school that is developmental and age appropriate.

We have focussed on monitoring student attendance and as a consequence during the year have introduced a variety of positive strategies to encourage regular student attendance such as 'It's Not Okay to Be Away' and a Wrist Band Reward system for regular attendance given for 1 week, 2weeks,1 month, 1 term, 2 terms, 3 terms and 1year.

The school prides itself on its welfare and support programs. At Pascoe Vale North Primary School we link into numerous services depending on student needs such as visiting teacher services for the hearing impaired, Yooralla Specialist Services, Koorie Liaison Officer, Speech Pathologists and Psychologists. Students who are living under difficult circumstances are supported with a school support group meetings where we can link into internal and external support agencies. Parents of these students are also offered support both emotionally and financially by being directed to the most suitable agency that can accommodate their needs.

In 2010 the school will be focussing on developing an emotionally resilient and safe school. All staff will be trained in the 'You Can Do It Program' and Peer Mediation will be extended.

Section 2: Whole School Prevention

At Pascoe Vale North Primary School our positive school culture is predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, our staff are 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 professional learning teams that encourage innovative pedagogy developed using the E5 instructional model and VELs.

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

- Positive social behaviours are promoted through programs such as: You Can Do It Program and Peer Mediation.
- Student Conferences provide opportunities for students to share goals and reflections with their parents/carers.
- Student Leadership programs such as: Junior School Council, Peer Mediation, House Captains, School Captains, Buddies Program 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: Edward DeBono's Thinking Hats.
- The school provides multiple opportunities for proactively engaging parents/carers and the wider community to be involved in the school's programs such as Parent Helpers Program, School Council, Parents Association. Timehelp Volunteers and acting as a host school coordinating professional development for the Northern and Western CRT Network.
- 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 PSD Support program.
- Adaptation 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.
- Professional learning is given high priority to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented.

Values at PVNPS – As reflected in “The Little Book of Excellence”

Excellence in learning	Discovering new things to improve knowledge and skills	Excellence in learning means having high standards, always being ready to learn new things, trying our best in every area of school life and being proud of what we achieve
A safe and caring environment	Looking after yourself and being considerate	Having a safe and caring environment means looks after buildings and grounds, making sure everyone is happy to come to school and valuing every member of our community
Community	Getting along with each other	Community means wanting to be a member of PVN, having open and honest relationships between parents, teachers and students, behaving only in ways that are best for the school, and being accepting of others

Responsibility	Making good decisions	Responsibility means being punctual and organised for school, following instructions, accepting consequences of decisions, being an excellent role model for others at PVNPS, always having a positive attitude, wearing our uniform with pride and remember that the school belongs to all of us
Respect	Consideration for others	Everyone has the right to listen to their teacher and learn

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 and are to be treated with 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*
2. *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
3. *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (in conjunction with DEECD Disability Standards for Education 2005)
4. *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*
5. *Education Act 1958*

The following policies need to be considered and consistent with implementing effective practice within the school community:

1. <i>Anti bullying and Cyber bullying policy</i>	24. <i>Equal Opportunity policy</i>
2. <i>Smoke Free Schools policy</i>	25. <i>Gifted and Talented policy</i>
3. <i>Drug Education policy</i>	26. <i>Homework policy</i>
4. <i>Attendance policy</i>	27. <i>Occupational Health and Safety policy</i>
5. <i>Complaints Resolution policy</i>	28. <i>Student Personal Growth policy</i>
6. <i>Uniform policy</i>	29. <i>Pupil Placement policy</i>
7. <i>Enrolment policy</i>	30. <i>Social Service policy</i>
8. <i>First Aid policy</i>	31. <i>Sponsorship policy</i>
9. <i>Internet usage policy</i>	32. <i>Students with Significant Health Needs policy</i>
10. <i>Medication policy</i>	33. <i>Teaching and Learning policy</i>
11. <i>Multicultural Diversity policy</i>	34. <i>Consolidation/Acceleration policy</i>
12. <i>Parent Engagement policy</i>	35. <i>Anaphylaxis policy</i>
13. <i>Sexual Harassment policy</i>	36. <i>Lost Property policy</i>
14. <i>Special Needs policy</i>	37. <i>Assessment and Reporting policy</i>
15. <i>Transition policy</i>	38. <i>Disabilities and Impairments policy</i>
16. <i>Yard Supervision policy</i>	39. <i>Drug Related Incidents policy</i>
17. <i>Heights Safety policy</i>	40. <i>Headlice policy</i>
18. <i>Grief Management policy</i>	41. <i>Privacy policy</i>
19. <i>Student Leadership policy</i>	42. <i>Student Health policy</i>
20. <i>Cultural Diversity policy</i>	43. <i>Sunsmart policy</i>
21. <i>Asthma policy</i>	44. <i>Mandatory Reporting policy</i>
22. <i>Curriculum policy</i>	45. <i>Community policy</i>
23. <i>Emergency Management policy</i>	

At Pascoe Vale North 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:

Rights	Responsibilities
To be free of harassment	To ensure others are not harassed
To receive support in difficult situations from the school community	To provide support to each other
To be valued and treated with respect	Build positive relationships with the school community

Students:

Rights	Responsibilities
To work and play without interference	To allow others to work and play without interference To report bullying to an adult
To be treated fairly and courteously	To be polite, courteous and well mannered
To learn in a secure environment	To allow others to learn

Staff:

Rights	Responsibilities
To be treated with respect by students, parents and peers	To treat students in a way that develops self-esteem To communicate positively with parents and peers
To expect students to follow the Engagement Guidelines	To follow the Engagement Guidelines. To use logical consequences and restorative practices To provide a Duty of Care to students To keep records of significant disciplinary actions
To expect students to learn	To assist students to learn To provide an inclusive and differentiated curriculum To ensure all students achieve success To communicate student progress to parents

Parents:

Rights	Responsibilities
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	Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials, attitude and basic organisational skills
To be contacted when their child frequently disregards the School Engagement Policy or is involved in a major incident	Promote manners and respectful relationships

Section 4: Shared Expectations

PVNPN 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 right of every child to receive an education up to the compulsory age of schooling
- ensure the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligations under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation
- identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning, educational and extra-curricular activities and community services inclusive and responsive to student needs.

The staff will:

- develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage different learners
- 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
- follow the schools Attendance Policy

Behaviour

PVN 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 the staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours .

The staff will:

- use the Student Engagement policy as a basis for developing class-based shared expectations with students
- teach students social competencies through curriculum content and pedagogical approach
- employ behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviour expected from students

- build a collegiate atmosphere 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 parent/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 courteous 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 collegiate 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 school's 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 PVN, 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 Appendices 10 & 11: Student Engagement Policy).
- The school recognises illness as a reasonable ground for absence.
- Clear written/verbal statements are made regularly to parents/carers/students about school and community attendance expectations.
- The Attendance Coordinator will closely monitor student attendance through the evaluation of the following student absence reports on CASES21.
- The Student Mapping Tool (SARS) 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.
- The professional responsible for Welfare or the Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained 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 absence 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.

Behavioural Consequences

Students are expected to cooperate:

To promote cooperation, students could choose to:	Cooperation is difficult when a student:	Appropriate responses to minor/initial incidents:	Major or repeated incidents:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider other classmates’ needs 	Always has to be first	Speak to child	Parents contacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think of ways for 	Refuses to take turns	Student to reflect on	Withdrawal of

<p>everyone to have a turn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage everyone to have a say 	<p>Ignores the ideas of others</p>	<p>the incident (student incident report may be completed)</p> <p>Reflection Sheet may allow opportunity for student to take responsibility for actions and repair damage done to people or property.</p>	<p>privileges, with explanation of how behaviour impacts our experience</p> <p>Behaviour management plan</p> <p>Student Support Group</p> <p>In school suspension.</p>
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Students are expected to play safely, show respect, learn, be honest, care and be responsible.

Detention

Teachers may require a student to finish school work which has not been completed in the regular classroom, or to undertake additional or new work 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 out of school hours, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes. The principal should ensure that parents are informed at least 24 hours prior to the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of work would create undue hardship, we may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents.

PVN is permitted to detain students but will take into account family circumstances and negotiate with parents where appropriate.

Student Support Group

A Student Support Group may be convened to schools to exchange information and facilitate solutions to behavioural problems or difficulties of students. In general, they will be convened at the school, although they could occur at alternative locations agreed to by the school and parents.

These meetings are to be held at a time suitable both to the school and to the parents. The purpose of procedures for such meetings will vary depending on the needs of individuals and schools, but they promote positive behaviours through a staged response. As well as teachers, parents and the student, the meeting could involve a person requested by the parents who is not acting for fee or reward, principal, or nominee and any support staff (including interpreters) who have been involved with the student and/or the student's family or who have particular relevant expertise. If the principal considers it warranted, or the student or the student's parents request, the principal must ensure suitable language interpretation facilities are made available.

A brief written statement including a list of participants and agreed outcomes should be maintained to assist future problem-solving processes at the school. The statement should be verified by the parents and/or student and remain confidential.

Exclusion

Details of suspension and expulsion procedures are discussed below, however, it should be noted that parents are to be involved in exclusion procedures.

Suspension – General information

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and should normally only be used when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. Suspension should be used for the shortest time necessary. The maximum period of time a student can be suspended consecutively is five school days. 'School days', as referred to in this document, does not include weekends, public holidays or school holidays. A student cannot be suspended for more than fifteen school days in a school year, unless approval is sought from the regional director. However, a student may be suspended for a further period (not exceeding five school days) pending the principal's decision whether to expel a student.

Procedures prior to suspension

With the exception of situations which require an immediate response, principals of schools should ensure that a range of options (and in particular those to accommodate the needs of students with a disability or impairment) has been considered before suspending a student. The student must be informed that suspension is being considered and given an opportunity to address the issues of concern and to respond positively, unless the principal is satisfied that immediate action (in the form of a suspension or expulsion) is required. When it is believed that a student's behaviour warrants suspension, the principal must ensure that every reasonable step is taken to arrange a meeting with the parent, the student and the student support group to discuss:

- the student's behaviour and performance
- the strategies being developed within the school to meet the educational needs of the student
- the possibility of suspension, should the behaviour continue
- the responsibilities of the parents, should suspension be considered necessary

(1) The principal must ensure that –

- (a) the behaviour, the educational needs of a student, disability, age of student and the residential social circumstances of the student has been considered before suspending a pupil
- (b) a pupil is informed that suspension is being considered and is given an opportunity to address the issues of concern and respond positively with a student support group that is consistent with a staged response, unless the principal is satisfied that immediate action (in the form of a suspension or expulsion) is required
- (c) the parent may be accompanied at that meeting by another person who is not acting for fee or reward
- (d) if it is considered warranted by the pupil or parent, the principal must ensure that suitable language interpretation facilities are available at the meeting arranged.

Grounds for suspension

- (1) A student may, by order of the principal of a state school, be suspended if, whilst attending school or travelling directly to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from school, including travel organised by the school, the student:
 - (a) behaves in such a way that threatens or endangers health, safety and wellbeing of any staff member, student or any person assisting in the conduct of school activities; or
 - (b) commits an act of significant violence against a person or property or being knowingly involved in the theft of property; or
 - (c) possesses, uses or assists another person to use prohibited drugs and substances; or
 - (d) fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher, or other staff member; or
 - (e) consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any student; or
 - (f) engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person.

Procedures for suspension

If the strategies outlined in 4.2.2 of the Student Engagement Policy Guidelines fail to achieve an acceptable change in behaviour and suspension is imposed, the following steps are to be taken:

- (1) The principal must provide the parents of the student with a copy of the Procedures for suspension brochure and notice of suspension (refer to Appendix 13: Student Engagement Policy) on the day on which the suspension commences or within twenty-four hours thereof.
- (2) The principal shall also provide the president of the school council with a copy of the notice of suspension.
- (3) At any time during the suspension of a student the parent can request a suspension conference. The principal may convene a suspension conference at any time, but must convene a suspension conference when a student has been suspended for five continuous school days on any one occasion and when a student has been suspended for a total of fifteen school days in any one school year.
 - (a) The suspension conference will involve a formal meeting convened by the school principal or nominee. The participants will involve the principal, student support group, parents, student and other key professionals. At the request of the parent, a person who is not acting for fee or reward may accompany the parent. No party to the conference may be represented by another person acting for fee or reward. Conference proceedings must remain confidential.
- (4) A suspension conference is to be conducted during the period of the suspension or as soon as practicable thereafter. The period of suspension shall not be extended due to delays in holding a suspension conference.
 - (a) A suspension conference will consider the educational, welfare and disciplinary strategies in relation to the pupil and will consider other options for meeting the pupil's educational needs.

Period of suspension

The maximum continuous period of time a pupil can be suspended at any one time is five school days. A pupil cannot be suspended for more than fifteen school days in a school year. The school shall provide appropriate and meaningful school work to be the suspended pupil that is in line with classroom coursework.

Expulsion – General Information

The School Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school according to the procedures set out below. This power cannot be delegated to any other person at the school level.

Permanent expulsion from a school is the most extreme sanction open to a Principal. Except in the most unusual and extreme circumstances, it will only be used after all other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in the engagement guidelines have been exhausted (refer to Appendix 2: Staged Response checklist: Student Engagement Policy).

Grounds for expulsion

A principal may expel a student if:

- (a) the student does anything for which they can be suspended
- (b) the student's behaviour is of such magnitude that affects the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students at the school

Procedures prior to expulsion

Prior to an expulsion the principal must ensure that:

- (a) a comprehensive range of strategies, consistent with a staged response has been implemented by the school
- (b) despite these strategies, the student’s inappropriate behaviour persists; and
- (c) the student and parents/carers are informed that expulsion is being considered and must be given the opportunity to be heard

Procedures for expulsion

- (1) The principal is responsible for a student’s expulsion. The principal must notify the regional director that a student support group is being convened to discuss expulsion.
- (2) The principal must convene a student support group meeting to:
 - (a) provide the student and their parents/carers with a Notice of Expulsion (refer to Appendix 15: Student Engagement Policy) before the day on which the expulsion commences
 - (b) provide a copy of the Procedures for expulsion to the student and their parents/carers
 - (c) identify the future educational, training and/or employment options most suited to the student’s needs
 - (d) a principal, within twenty-four hours of the commencement of the expulsion, must forward a copy of the Notice of Expulsion (refer to Appendix 15: Student Engagement Policy) to the regional director with a written expulsion report (refer Appendix 16: Student Engagement Policy).

Transition Arrangements

If a school expels a student, the school must schedule a meeting with the destination school or registered training organisation of the expelled student.

Expulsion Appeal Process

A principal’s decision to expel a student can be appealed by the student or the student’s parents/carers.

The principal must provide the student and parent/carers with an Expulsion Appeal proforma (refer to Appendix 18: Student Engagement Policy), at the final student support group meeting.

The appeal must be lodged with the principal within ten school days of receiving the Notice of Expulsion and the principal must provide the regional director with a copy of the Expulsion Appeal within twenty-four hours.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in February 2011

Name of School Council President

Signature of School Council President.....