Gembrook Primary School

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

March, 2010
# Table of contents

1. **School profile statement** ........................................... 3
2. **Whole-school prevention statement** ............................. 4
3. **Rights and responsibilities** ....................................... 6
4. **Shared expectations** ............................................. 8
5. **School actions and consequences** .............................. 11

**References** ................................................................... 14
1. School profile statement

Gembrook Primary School is proud of its achievements in student learning with high achievements in a range of assessments. Student learning outcomes are in the top 20% of government primary schools in Victoria in literacy and numeracy. In NAPLAN (National testing), the school comparison measures show that we are excelling in Year 3 results for reading and numeracy, and in Year 5 numeracy, with room for improvement in Year 5 reading.

A future focus on developing the capacity of our staff and the capabilities of our students will occur with particular emphasis on inquiry learning and numeracy. We will develop a whole school approach to the planning, teaching and assessment of numeracy and inquiry learning. Assessment strategies to support the individual learning needs of students will be expanded.

In 2010 the school will continue to improve the quality of the teaching and learning program through targeted professional learning and reflective practises. The school will continue to strengthen the whole school developmental approach to the teaching and learning of English and Mathematics.

The school has a strong student welfare program that recognizes the impact of student engagement and school connectedness on effective student learning. Student engagement is defined as:

- **Behavioural** engagement – a student’s participation in education, including academic, social and extracurricular activities at the school.
- **Emotional** engagement – a student’s emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school, a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- **Cognitive** engagement – a student’s investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self regulation.
2. Whole-school prevention statement

The Gembrook Primary School community believes that students learn best in a secure, happy, non-discriminatory environment in which the rights of the individual are respected and within which personal responsibility and self-discipline can be developed.

We are committed to building the emotional intelligence and social capacity of students through the implementation of a whole school approach.

Programs that guide the relationships of the school community, support our students to attend school and underpin the teaching and learning throughout the school are vital to the well-being of all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Across the school</th>
<th>Class Levels</th>
<th>Community/Parent linked</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole school Welfare</td>
<td>Leadership Program – Yr 6</td>
<td>World Vision sponsored child</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Representative Council</td>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>Parent Helpers program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole school activity days</td>
<td>Vegetable garden</td>
<td>Work Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration support programs</td>
<td>Camping program</td>
<td>Parent Information Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excursions and Incursions</td>
<td>Flexible learning spaces</td>
<td>Sustainability group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiated Curriculum</td>
<td>Buddy program – Prep / Gr 6</td>
<td>School Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT rich environment</td>
<td>Reading Intervention</td>
<td>PFA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainability programs</td>
<td>Numeracy Intervention</td>
<td>Family nights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assembly awards</td>
<td>Literature Circles</td>
<td>Social / Community projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choir</td>
<td>K – Prep transition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Education</td>
<td>Yr 6-7 transition</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instrumental music programs</td>
<td>Human Powered Vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunsmart program</td>
<td>Program Gr 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go for it! Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>You Can Do It</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Age activities</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Specialist programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunchtime activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole school transition</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘It’s not Ok to be away’ program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walk and ride to school days</td>
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</table>

A set of values that guide the relationships and supports the teaching and learning programs throughout the school form the foundation of our school community.

At Gembrook Primary School our core value is

**Respect**

- By showing respect for others including adults and fellow students, we will be treating them the way we would like to be treated.
- By showing respect for ourselves as learners we will be doing our best and be successful learners.
- By showing respect for our environment we will create an organised and well maintained learning space.
The school value of Respect encompasses 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

We will encourage the understanding of respect by focusing on and teaching:

- The ‘You Can Do It! Program – This program helps young people achieve to the best of their ability and experience positive social-emotional well-being. It teaches the skills of:
  - Getting Along
  - Organisation
  - Persistence
  - Confidence.
- Circle Time activities that foster respectful problem solving.
- Cross-Age and whole school activities.
- Sustainability programs that encourage respect for the environment and a sense of ownership.
- Opportunities for children to be involved in Leadership roles within the school. i.e. S.R.C. Grade 6 leadership roles, Green Team.
- The establishment of ‘Engagement and Well-being Goals and Targets as part of our Annual Implementation Plan
3. Rights and responsibilities

A right is something which belongs to you and cannot be taken away by anyone. All students, teachers and parents have rights.

A responsibility is some thing that you should do without being told. Some of these things you do for others and some you do for yourself.

Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

At Gembrook Primary School, student well-being is at all times the shared responsibility of staff, students and parents. Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive, inclusive and welcoming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights of students</th>
<th>Responsibilities of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students have a right to:</td>
<td>Students have a responsibility to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A positive educational environment that creates the maximum opportunity to learn</td>
<td>• Participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feel safe and secure at all times</td>
<td>• Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be treated with dignity and respect regardless of gender, ethnic origin, religion or ability</td>
<td>• As students progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be treated fairly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights of Parents / Carers</th>
<th>Responsibilities of Parents / Carers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents / Carers have the right to:</td>
<td>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feel welcomed</td>
<td>• Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modeling positive behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Know that their children work, play and learn in a safe, friendly and supportive school environment.</td>
<td>• Ensure their child’s regular attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rights of Teachers

- Teach in a safe, orderly and co-operative school environment
- Feel supported in the school environment
- Be treated with dignity and respect

Responsibilities of Teachers

- Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy.
- 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.
- Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

The Gembrook Primary School Community is committed to all children feeling safe while they are at school.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group. People who use the internet, email, intranets, phones or similar technologies to bully others or hold power over others are termed cyber bullies. Indirect bullying is harder to recognize and is often carried out behind the bullied student’s back. It is designed to harm someone’s social reputation and or cause humiliation.

Gembrook Primary School endorses the findings of the following legislations and at all times adheres to the findings in them:

- **The Equal Opportunity Act of 1995**: grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aim 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.


- **The Education and Training Reform Act 2006**.
4. Shared expectations

Characteristics of shared expectations in effective schools.

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole school community. Shared expectations are:

- Jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students.
- Clear and specific.
- Focused on positive and pro-social behaviours.
- Focused on prevention and early intervention.
- Supported by relevant procedures.
- Consistent, fair and reasonable.
- Linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

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.

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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPECTATIONS of PRINCIPAL TEACHERS &amp; SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th>EXPECTATIONS of STUDENTS</th>
<th>EXPECTATIONS of PARENT/CARER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education staff will...</strong></td>
<td><strong>The student will...</strong></td>
<td><strong>The parent/carer will...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Use and manage the materials, resources and physical space of their classroom to create a stimulating and safe environment for learning</td>
<td>➢ Respect their environment, listen to their peers and tolerate others thoughts and attitudes</td>
<td>➢ Be aware of curriculum modifications and support them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Provide a learning environment that engages and challenges their students and encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning</td>
<td>➢ Engage positively and respectfully</td>
<td>➢ Adhere to school expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Plan for the use of a range of activities, resources and materials</td>
<td>➢ Demonstrate behaviour and attitude that supports the wellbeing and learning of all and contributes to a positive school environment that is safe, inclusive and happy</td>
<td>➢ Provide the school with relevant information to ensure that appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Provide meaningful learning opportunities for all their students</td>
<td>➢ Show reciprocal respect for all</td>
<td>➢ Contribute to and support the school in recommendations for the best use of school and community resources in tailoring individual programs to address a child’s needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Develop an understanding and respect for their students as individuals, and are sensitive to their social needs and the way they interact with others</td>
<td>➢ Respect the rights of others and be sensitive to difference</td>
<td>➢ Show reciprocal respect for all members of the school community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Be aware of the social, cultural and religious backgrounds of the students they teach, and treat students equitably</td>
<td>➢ Recognize social similarities and differences and respect the right for those to be expressed</td>
<td>➢ Value the opinions of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary</td>
<td>➢ Respect, value and learn from the differences of others</td>
<td>➢ Respect and support teacher’s attempts to problem solve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Use their knowledge of students, content and pedagogy to establish clear and achievable learning goals for their student</td>
<td>➢ Willingly undertake work set by teachers that has been customised to suit learning styles and abilities.</td>
<td>➢ Work with the school to improve interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Establish and maintain clear and consistent expectations for students as learners and for their behaviour in the classroom</td>
<td>➢ Accept and acknowledge their limitations</td>
<td>➢ Work with the school in partnership to provide for their child’s needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Know the learning strengths and weaknesses of their students and are aware of the factors that influence their learning</td>
<td>➢ Respond to explanations for the consequences of non-compliant behaviour in a composed manner</td>
<td>➢ Show support for the school’s processes of enlisting assistance at various points in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Understand and fulfil their legal responsibilities and share responsibility for the integrity of their profession</td>
<td>➢ Be honest</td>
<td>➢ Support their student’s learning by ensuring punctuality, regular attendance, provision of uniforms and school equipment, to maximise learning opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Develop a positive learning environment where respect for individuals is fostered and where learning is the focus</td>
<td>➢ Be courteous and mindful of all others</td>
<td>➢ Make themselves accessible to teachers so as to ensure that mutually clear communication pathways are introduced and maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Support an attitude of a new day equals a new beginning</td>
<td>➢ Act in a respectful manner towards school staff and other students</td>
<td>➢ Provide a loving caring and supportive environment for children at home which support their education and school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Work effectively with other professionals, parents, carers and members of the broader community to provide effective learning for students</td>
<td>➢ Accept differences and celebrate them</td>
<td>➢ Accept and endeavour to understand differences and celebrate them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Uphold confidentiality and privacy in a physical and social setting</td>
<td>➢ Respect others needs in the learning environment</td>
<td>➢ Uphold confidentiality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 whole-school 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 students, parents and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- scaffolding the student’s learning program.
- Restorative practices – see below
- Following the agreed Behaviour Flow Chart (attached)

Broader support strategies will include:

- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- involving the student wellbeing coordinator, developing and managing individual pathways.
- Specialist sessions and intervention which may include councillors, speech therapists, occupational therapists, guidance officers, chaplain.
- 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, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving community support agencies.

Restorative Practices

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person’s rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).
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.

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.
Behaviour Flow Chart
At all times Restorative Practices will be the preferred strategy used to resolve issues.

**Unacceptable Behaviours**
Disruptive, swearing, physically hurting/touching, threatening behaviour

- **Step 1**
  Warning
  Revisit the class expectations
  Agree on behaviour

- **Step 2**
  If behaviour continues, student removed from classroom.
  A reflection sheet may be used to prompt discussion.
  Re-entry meeting via Restorative Chat to include all the people involved and a recorded agreement on future behaviour.

**Serious Incidents**
Fighting (Assault), Theft, Verbally Abusive to Staff
Principal involved with resolution of matter with Parents/Teacher/Student

- **Step 3**
  If behaviour continues, student is withdrawn from the class for the remainder of the day. (Principals Office)
  Parents are informed.
  Re-entry meeting via Restorative Discussion the next day to include all the people involved and a recorded agreement on future behaviour.

**Yard Duty**
Minor offences are dealt with in the yard with Restorative Chat
Major incidences: Student is removed from the yard and Principal may be involved with resolution of the matter with Parents/Teacher/Student
## References

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>URL</th>
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