



## **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

### **Brunswick South Primary School**

<b>Policy Implementation Date</b> May 2016	<b>Review Date</b> May 2019	<b>Responsible for Review</b> Policy Subcommittee
---	--------------------------------	--

### **Rationale**

At Brunswick South Primary School, the welfare of our students is paramount. Student wellbeing and engagement are a priority, and drive our teaching and learning programs.

At Brunswick South Primary School we want to

- create an environment that promotes positive health, emotional competency and where students can thrive and flourish
- create a student centred school through inclusion and positive relationships

### **Implementation**

School, home and the community have a shared accountability for student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours. To promote and foster student engagement across the school, Brunswick South will implement proactive strategies for:

- building a culture of fostering positive relationships;
- establishing predictable, fair environments;
- providing personalised learning programs;
- acknowledging all students contributions to school life;
- providing opportunities for decision making and responsibility;
- providing a pleasant physical environment;
- teaching and promoting student managed learning

### **School Profile Statement**

Brunswick South Primary School (BSPS) was established in 1886 and has a long history of involvement in the Brunswick community. It is situated on the border of Brunswick and Carlton on Brunswick Road and is housed in two brick buildings with heritage classification.

The teacher profile at BSPS represents a balance of experienced and graduate teachers. The school is student and curriculum focused. It strives for and encourages maximum achievement in all areas of teaching and learning and student well being. Specialist programs include: Italian, Music, Physical Education and Art. Our Out of School Hours Child-Care program has had an increased participation by students.

The school prides itself on promoting an environment where learning for life is promoted through strong partnerships between staff, students and their families. Our students and staff learn together, building a culture that is caring, just and educationally sound. While respect for each other and the environment is the foundation for our school values, we strive for equality, friendliness and a genuine commitment to achievement for all.

The school promotes the philosophy of equal opportunity, non-discrimination and the recognition of the diversity of cultures. Each student is aware that bullying and intolerance are not accepted at school, and that good manners, hard work and kind deeds are encouraged.

We have focused on monitoring student attendance and as a consequence over the years have introduced a variety of positive strategies to encourage regular attendance. We have introduced a SMS system and eCASES to report absences.

The school prides itself on being a supportive and caring school. Students who are living under difficult circumstances are supported by the school. 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.

At Brunswick South Primary School we aim:

- 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 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

### **Whole School Prevention**

At Brunswick South Primary School our positive school culture is predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, our leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff and students is promoted through learning circles and professional learning teams that encourage innovative pedagogy developed using AusVels and research based strategies for increasing student achievement, Classroom Instruction that Works.

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

- Implementing the 24 Character Strength program across the school. All strengths can be developed and research has found that these strengths can benefit happiness and wellbeing
- The school provides multiple opportunities for proactively engaging parents/carers and the wider community to be involved in the school's programs such as: Parental involvement in the Reading program, Kitchen Garden Program, PMP program
- 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
- Adaption of current pedagogical knowledge and thinking to engage students in meaningful learning experiences
- Students are encouraged to achieve full attendance to maximise their ability to learn and our teachers' ability to teach effectively
- Development of intensive literacy and numeracy improvement strategies implemented as part of the school improvement agenda and in response to the changing demographics
- Professional learning is given high priority to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented

## Our Metier

- We plan, deliver and evaluate teaching and learning collaboratively, in teams across all year levels
- We ensure the learning environment is orderly, safe, supportive and productive
- We promote independence, interdependence, self-motivation and curiosity
- Student needs, their backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected throughout a differentiated approach to teaching and learning
- Students are challenged and supported to develop deeper levels of understanding, thinking and application
- Academic rigor is ensured through reflection, evaluation, assessment and the use of data to drive improvement
- We connect strongly with our community
- While the child is always at the centre of learning, our staff are also committed to building the capacity of themselves and the parents to further support student learning

## School Rights and Responsibilities

At Brunswick South Primary School, we value learning that empowers each student to explore and engage with the world. In our school community we value difference and we believe in a fair go for all.

We value the free and confident communication of ideas and opinions, and fostering self acceptance and the challenge to learn, grow and develop one's potential.

With these objectives in mind, every member of Brunswick South Primary School community has the right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect, dignity and honesty. Everyone has the responsibility to consider others, to embrace the value of difference and to contribute to building a fair and just environment.

Brunswick South Primary School acknowledges its obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and accepts its

responsibility to communicate these obligations to all members of the school community.

Any form of violence, bullying, harassment, intimidation and discrimination is unacceptable and

undermines the capacity of the school community to work together.

The school acknowledges its students' rights to education and that a student can only be excluded from school as a last response to inappropriate behaviours.

## **Shared Expectations**

Brunswick South 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 school expectations are intended to support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.

## **Principals Teachers Staff Engagement**

The school will provide an educational environment that ensures all students are respected and cared for.

Individual student learning needs will be catered for through a flexible learning approach that incorporates a range of different learning styles.

## **Attendance**

The school will engage in practices that:

- Proactively promote regular attendance.
- Provide parents with contact telephone numbers for information if absences occur.
- Accurately mark rolls twice daily.
- Follow-up any regular student absences.
- Analyse attendance data to identify trends or problems with particular students.
- Report the attendance data in the Annual Report to the school community.
- Communicate with parents/carers if any action is required regarding issues with nonattendance

## **Behaviour**

The school will support and promote positive behavior.

With student well being at the centre of school operations, appropriate behaviours will be modeled and reinforced consistently throughout the school by:

- day to day modeling of desirable behaviors by the whole school community.
- development and implementation of behavior management strategies that reflect the school's metier
- high expectations of appropriate behavior.

## Students Engagement

Demonstrate:

- a preparedness to engage fully in the school's curriculum.
- always putting in your personal best.
- encouraging others and working co-operatively
- developing a culture of support for individual learning differences within the classroom

### Attendance

- students are expected to attend school everyday that the school is open to students
- arrive at school on time and ready to learn
- provide written or verbal explanation from parent/carer if absences occur

### Behaviour

It is expected that students will:

- demonstrate the school's values in their learning and behavior.
- have high expectations for their own learning.
- make a commitment to enhance the learning experiences of other students.
- understand and take responsibility for the impact of their behavior

## Parents/Carer Engagement:

- support their children in their preparedness for school each day. This includes sleep routines, healthy diet and exercise, personal hygiene and providing a safe and secure home environment
- ensure their child/children complete homework
- remain informed about school activities by reading newsletters, attending Parent/teacher interviews.
- where possible offer support for school activities such as the Art Show, Working Bees and various school committees.

### Attendance

- ensure that all students' enrolment details are correct.
- ensure that all students attend school regularly.
- advise the school as soon as possible if a child is going to be absent
- account for all student absences

### Behaviour

- support the school's values and reinforce the school's behavioural expectations
- encourage their children to exhibit these values in all that they do

## School Actions and Consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours are supported most effectively through relationship-based whole-school and classroom practices.

At BSPS we:

- Establish a fair and democratic classroom and school environment.
- Ensure student participation in the development of classroom and whole-school expectations.

- Consistently acknowledge all students.
- Empower students by creating opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making.
- Provide physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning.

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, are responded to through a staged response with a focus on prevention and early intervention, including:

- Understanding the student.
- 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 include:

- Involving and supporting the parents/carers.
- Convening student support group meetings.
- Developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans.
- Involving community support agencies.

A student should only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

- The Principal is responsible for deciding if a student will be suspended, based on the grounds for suspension outlined in the **Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines**.
- The Principal will follow the procedures for expulsion, and for support of the student after expulsion, as outlined in **Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines**.

## Student Welfare & Management Restorative Practices

The philosophy of Restorative Practice encourages schools to shift their thinking from a traditional model of punishment to one of accountability, education and meaningful change and involves the development and enhancement of relationships and social competencies.

It is a proactive approach to student management that focuses on developing quality relationships within the school community. It views inappropriate behaviour as harmful to these relationships, rather than rule breaking, and aims to assist teachers and students to develop the skills to engage in practices that will restore or repair these relationships and ultimately lead to improved learning outcomes for students. It views wrong doing as a violation of people and relationships. When this occurs the Restorative approach is concerned with healing and repairing the relationships. In this sense it strengthens feelings of caring, belonging and community among school members. It thus seeks to restore these relationships when they have been damaged.

The process encourages students to understand the choices they make, take responsibility for their behaviour, and repair any damage and/or harm.

Restorative teachers views wrong doing as an opportunity for learning. They use methods that develop social and emotional knowledge and skills. They create safe environments by using processes that treat all participants fairly, and with respect and dignity. Their discussions are concerned with reconnecting people and repairing relationships. They focus on the needs of everybody including the wrongdoer.

Students learn to trust the school and its processes. Victims and others learn to trust that they will be protected, that their relationships will be repaired and that things will be made right. Wrongdoers learn to trust that the restorative dialogue will help them to understand and take responsibility for the harm done.

## Student Welfare & Management Method of Shared Concern

The Method of Shared Concern aims to change the **behaviour** of students who are bullying and to improve the situation for the student being bullied. This method helps students to develop empathy and concern for others and gives them strategies to help them get along better with others in the school and at home.

### What happens in shared concern?

1. Individual meetings are held with each of the students involved in the bullying incident: the student or students bullying, the person being bullied and any bystanders who may have seen what was happening.
2. Each student is asked about the problem and to suggest ways he or she personally could help to improve the situation.
3. The student being bullied is also given the opportunity to discuss what happened and encouraged to think of ways to improve the situation.

4. There are follow-up meetings, discussions and planning that give students the opportunity to change and improve attitudes and behaviours and to put these into practice in a supportive environment.

## **Student Welfare & Management Mediation**

Mediation is a positive problem-solving process that can prevent conflicts and misunderstandings from becoming protracted and destructive disputes. It aims to help people resolve their differences. It helps disputing parties to assess their options realistically and reach mutually acceptable solutions. The mediation process encourages future co-operation.

It is a structured, goal-directed process that follows clear steps, and resolves disputes confidentially. An independent third party, the mediator, helps the parties to talk with one another, and to listen to one another's grievances. Through this exchange of information parties gain insight into how the other is feeling about the situation, and they achieve understanding and respect. The mediator focuses discussion between the parties on problem-solving rather than blame and punishment.

While other methods of conflict resolution in schools may involve a solution or decision being imposed upon the parties by someone in authority, mediation invites parties to formulate their own solutions, and to take responsibility for their actions.

Mediation is a conflict resolution process that can be applied across the school community. As such, it is an ideal process to integrate into whole school community policies and procedures.

### **Basic Steps in Mediation**

1. Creating the context – a comfortable and private space and sufficient uninterrupted time are provided
2. Explaining the process – the purpose and ground rules of mediation are discussed
3. Listening to what happened – both sides are enabled to tell their story in turn and without interruption
4. Defining problems and concerns – concerns are clarified and an agenda is set by the mediator with participants
5. Focusing on the future and finding solutions – solutions that suit both parties are sought from the parties themselves
6. Concluding – a shared agreement is confirmed and sometimes written down.

### **Ratification and Review**

This policy was ratified by the School Council in . This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle and in the event of any incident which may prompt a review of the policy.