

LYNBROOK 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, 2015

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1 School profile statement

Lynbrook Primary School is situated within the City of Casey and is part of the South East growth corridor. The campus is bordered by the South Gippsland and Westernport Highways and Evans Road. The school opened in 2005 and has grown significantly since this time with a current enrolment of 972 students. It has an enrolment boundary in place to limit its overall enrolment.

The school is surrounded by relatively new homes and the school and its local community are serviced by large open parks and a shopping /services precinct. The school's Student Family Occupation Index is 0.5735. In the majority of homes, both parents work. Before and after school care is outsourced and more than fifty children attend regularly.

The school has modern and well-resourced facilities including a Performing Arts Centre funded by the Building Education Revolution initiative. Facilities and grounds are well maintained and reflect the pride staff and students have in their learning environment. All classrooms are well equipped to enable the use of learning technologies. The play areas are large and the school has access to a large oval which is shared under a Joint Use Agreement with the City of Casey.

492 boys and 480 girls from 670 families form the student population. They are organised into forty-four grades. The school operates single classrooms from Foundation to Year 4 and Open Learning Hubs in Years 5 and 6. Core curriculum is a priority and there is a strong belief in the school that achievement in these will only be optimised if children have a strong sense of belonging and are engaged in their education. Specialist learning includes Music, Art, Physical Education and Science. Outdoor Education, Information Technology and other individual interest areas encourage student engagement.

More than 50% of the staff has less than ten years teaching experience. Staff work together as Professional Learning Teams. All teachers are actively involved in Action Research Projects within the school.

The staffing profile includes 4 Principal Class Officers, 4 Leading Teachers and 66 teachers. 21 Education Support Staff are deployed in various roles throughout the school including supporting the 27 students on the Program for Students with Disabilities.

The school is culturally diverse with over 40 different languages being spoken at home; approximately 300 students, (almost 30%), have a Language Background Other Than English. The school celebrates diversity with pride and promotes tolerance, understanding and caring. The school community supports a school in Siem Reap.

Despite the parent groups' high regard for education, parental involvement in the school is not high. The challenge ahead is to ensure that innovative teaching practices and consistent assessment of student performance results in deeper and sustained learning.

We have a very strong social competencies program which embeds a culture of caring for others, acting responsibly and developing independence. This, combined with our "You Can Do It," Buddy Programs, ensures students reflect on their behaviours and attitudes. These positive behaviours are celebrated in our weekly assemblies.

Cultural diversity is recognised and celebrated at the school and acceptance of all is a standard expectation. All children, staff and community members have an equal right that their school experience should be free of any intimidation, aggression, harassment or prejudice. A zero tolerance to inappropriate behaviour to others is reinforced through the school's policies on; Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination and Codes of Conduct.

2 Whole-school prevention statement

The underpinning foundation of Lynbrook Primary School's Learning Environment is Positive Student Engagement. Lynbrook Primary School has an extensive range of programs and strategies in place for the development of behaviours and attitudes that enhance student engagement, attendance and positive behaviours. These programs and strategies include the following School Vision, Mission Statement and Values:

Vision

Together, through endless opportunities, we inspire lifelong achievers.

Mission

Lynbrook Primary School will provide a holistic education by:-

- providing innovative opportunities
- creating a diverse, safe and supportive learning environment that values students' individuality,
- respecting cultural diversity,
- encouraging critical and creative thinking,
- facilitating strong community relationships and developing proactive individuals.

At Lynbrook Primary school there is an expectation that the students, staff and community nurture a positive, supportive and respectful environment that values diversity. Our school values, outlined below, underpin this philosophy;

VALUES

Respect

We demonstrate respect by:-

- actively listening to one another
- valuing others' contributions, beliefs and opinions
- caring for school and other people's property
- being punctual
- taking pride in our dress and appearance
- celebrating cultural diversity
- accepting individuality

Team Work

We demonstrate team work by:-

- cooperating with others
- improving our listening and communication skills
- allowing compromise at times
- working together to achieve goals
- enabling everyone to contribute
- being fair and supportive
- sharing leadership roles
- building on peoples strengths

Excellence

We demonstrate excellence by:-

- setting achievable goals and expectations to maximise potential
- working to the best of our ability
- creating opportunities to extend
- building the confidence to take risks
- being open minded
- celebrating achievements
- embracing challenges.

Caring

We demonstrate caring by:-

- looking after ourselves and others
- providing a safe environment
- treating others equally with kindness and empathy
- appreciating others achievements

Responsibility

We demonstrate responsibility by:-

- accepting leadership opportunities
- fulfilling obligations
- looking after our possessions
- accepting consequences for our actions
- working towards greater independence
- displaying appropriate behaviour
- looking after the environment
- being prepared
- reflecting on our actions

Our Social Competencies program promotes pro social values and behaviours. We encourage our school community to take responsibility for their actions and learning. Parents and carers work in partnership with all staff, including interactions with SSSO's and external organisations.

Programs that promote Student Engagement and Participation include;

Outdoor Education

- Bike Ed
- Camping
- Water Safety
- Environmental Studies
- Science

ICT

- 1 to 1 BYO iPad Program from years 4-6
- Classroom sets of iPads Prep – year 3
- Interactive Whiteboards
- Digital TV
- Multimedia

The Arts

Performing Arts

- Music
- Productions

Visual Arts

- Arts Festival
- Special activity programs

LOTE

Auslan

Individual Learning Programs

- Intervention
- Extension
- PSDs

Social Competencies & Awareness

- Student Welfare and Support Committee
- You Can Do It
- Cultural Diversity and Harmony Day
- Restorative Practice
- Leadership Program
 - SRC
 - Peer Mediation
 - Buddy Program
- Awards that recognise student achievement

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

- 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 is '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.

Lynbrook Primary School also adheres to the Victorian Education and Training Reform Act 2006:

Victoria's *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* updates and replaces 12 separate Acts and provides a robust and modern legislative framework for our education system. The Act came into effect when it was proclaimed on Sunday, 1 July 2007 by the Governor in Council. The Act includes a set of principles on which the practice of education is to be based, and will:

- recognise a parent/caregivers right to choose an appropriate education for their child
- ensure that all students have a right to attend a designated government school
- affirm the principle of free instruction in a government school
- increase the school leaving age from 15 to 16 years
- guarantee a place in TAFE Institutes and participating adult education providers, to young people who have not completed Year 12 or its equivalent up to the age of 20
- establish a new statutory authority – the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) – responsible for the regulation and accreditation of government

and non-government schools, training and higher education providers except universities

- register home schooling under the VRQA
- maintain the concept of a secular schools system
- give students and parents/carers the right to information regarding their school - schools will be required to provide information to their community through an annual reporting process.

The following rights and responsibilities encompasses the principles as outlined in the aforementioned legislation i.e.: *Equal Opportunity Act 1995, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Disability Standards for Education 2005, Education and Training Reform Act 2006.*

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition • participate fully in the school's educational program 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. • 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. • Students should, with support, be expected to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged 	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours. • Ensure their child’s regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning. • Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student 	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

4. Shared expectations

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, 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.

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
- acknowledging and celebrating cultural diversity through a range of activities and

programs, eg; Harmony Day, Harmony Garden and parent participation

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

Examples of Appropriate Behaviours by students are those articulated in our Values:

Respect

- actively listening to one another
- valuing others' contributions, beliefs and opinions
- caring for school and other people's property
- being punctual
- taking pride in our dress and appearance
- celebrating cultural diversity
- accepting individuality

Team Work

- cooperating with others
- improving our listening and communication skills
- allowing compromise at times
- working together to achieve goals
- enabling everyone to contribute
- being fair and supportive
- sharing leadership roles
- building on peoples strengths

Excellence

- setting achievable goals and expectations to maximise potential
- working to the best of our ability
- creating opportunities to extend
- building the confidence to take risks
- being open minded
- celebrating achievements
- embracing challenges.

Caring

- looking after ourselves and others
- providing a safe environment
- treating others equally with kindness and empathy
- appreciating others achievements

Responsibility

- accepting leadership opportunities
- fulfilling obligations
- looking after our possessions
- accepting consequences for our actions
- working towards greater independence
- displaying appropriate behaviour
- looking after the environment
- being prepared
- reflecting on our actions

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.

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.
- Withdrawal from the playground when incidents occur at recess or lunch.

Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

- Issuing of the school's, "Red Slip Notification". Parents are informed by phone and letter of the misdemeanour and process to be followed. A second incident that requires a "Red Slip" results in the convening of the Student Support Group. A third "Red Slip" in any one term will result in suspension.
- 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.
- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

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

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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/elearningsupportservices/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/eo/eoact.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