Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy

School Profile Statement

Brandon Park Primary School provides exemplary and diverse educational opportunities in an inclusive, stimulating, safe and nurturing environment. We believe that successful students are global citizens who are literate, numerate and creative, with the social capacity to plan for the future. Our students' talents, strengths and aspirations are identified, nurtured and celebrated. We celebrate effort and achievement in the belief that all students can thrive and lead productive and fulfilling lives in the 21st century. Our aim is to create a learning community of lifelong learners.

Brandon Park Primary School was established in 1971. We are a school with continually increasing enrolments. Our student achievement data is excellent and the My School website has been a drawcard for many new families. Our students are from diverse cultural backgrounds and we celebrate this at every opportunity. There is no one dominant culture. We draw our enrolments from numerous pre-schools and child care centres within the area. Most of our exiting students attend either Brentwood or Wheelers Hill Secondary Colleges with very few attending private schools apart from a local Catholic boys' or girls' school.

We are a PLC (Professional Learning Community) Link School. Our staff use an approach to school improvement whereby we they work collaboratively to improve student outcomes. We have created a school culture that is:

- Focused on continuous improvement by linking the learning needs of students with the professional learning and practice of teachers.
- Committed to professionalism.
- Fuelled by collaborative expertise.

Our priority is to foster the development of the whole child with a particular focus on excellence in literacy and numeracy. Our students are cognitively engaged through access to personalised learning and the curriculum provides a range of rich and authentic learning opportunities. We implement curriculum, instructional processes and resources to maximise the diverse needs of all students with an emphasis on differentiated learning. The digital competencies of our students are paramount and we incorporate ICT into all aspects of teaching and learning. Every class has an interactive whiteboard or LED TV and class sets of I-pads and lap top computers. We offer a range of extracurricular activities, literacy and numeracy support and devise Individual Education Plans for those students either 2 years above or 1 year below the expected level. We have a Languages (Mandarin), Visual Arts, Physical Education, Science and Music specialist teachers.

We teach, model and develop behaviour that promotes everyone's integrity, safety and wellbeing. Students learn to work with others by: building positive social relationships; working and learning in teams; and managing and resolving conflicts. We do this incidentally and through a number of formal programs, such as Respectful Relationships. The understandings and skills of leadership are built into the curriculum and varied activities of school life. Students develop their individual capacity to lead and influence others in a responsible manner. Values education is embedded within all that we do.

Our agreed set of values is also central to all policy and decision making. These values give emphasis to the cooperative and caring nature of the school's ethos, and promote recognition of a positive and persistent attitude with a strong sense of responsibility and respect. They are embedded in the culture of the school and it is our expectation that all staff and students will model these on a daily basis:

Teamwork We share a sense of common purpose; we share responsibility, collaboration and mutual support.

Respect We respect ourselves, others, our property and our school's history and traditions.

Creativity We encourage our students to take risks and think beyond the square; maximising teaching and learning opportunities through innovative and alternative approaches.

Persistence We believe in ourselves, accept challenges, try hard and do not give up easily.

Excellence We strive for the highest quality in every aspect of our work

Honesty We have the courage to say no and to tell courage the truth. We do the right thing because it is right.

We consider Engagement as the vital core of all school activity as this ensures student participation and student success. We create conditions, employ the practices and develop the behaviours, attitudes and learning environments that are conducive to student voice, agency and leadership. We facilitate rich conversations, collaborate and take actions to empower students. By empowering students we enhance student engagement and enrich their participation:

- We enable students to 'own' their learning and development.

- We create a positive climate for learning.

All our endeavours are student-centred with an emphasis on stimulating learning programs that differentiate in order to cater for the individual needs of students. These programs are also supported and enhanced through our focus on maintaining a positive school culture. The following programs and strategies are targeted towards improving and enhancing student engagement.

Restorative Practice – by adopting a restorative philosophy to behaviour management we use relational language that demonstrates respect, care and mutual responsibility. Restorative Practice is about building communities of care around individuals and while not condoning harmful behaviour it holds individuals accountable for their actions. In essence our restorative programs are about nurturing positive feelings (interest and excitement) and providing avenues to discharge negative feelings (shame). Restorative practices lead to further engagement with the community, as evidenced by enhanced or re-established community participation.

Circle Time – is a space in which our students learn the skills they need to thrive in life, such as effective communication, emotional literacy, anger management, peer mediation and conflict resolution. These may, in turn, have a positive impact on behaviour in those students but this is a side-effect rather than a goal of circle time. We use this strategy on a regular basis in all classrooms.

Individual Education Learning Plans (IEP) – whilst most students are achieving at the expected level there are instances when an individual plan is developed with specific goals and strategies developed as focus areas. Classroom teachers play a crucial role in identifying student experiencing difficulties and develop an IEP in consultation with the school administration and parents. All students achieving one year below or two years above the expected level have an IEP. If a child exhibits constantly inappropriate behaviour an IEP or Behaviour Management Plan is also devised.

Student Leadership Team Program – Senior school students have the opportunity to take on roles as House and School Captains. Student leaders have the opportunity to participate in leadership programs and take on a range of other responsibilities at school

Student Recognition Awards (Certificates of Success) – The school's weekly Certificates of Success are based on personal, interpersonal, academic, creative or sporting prowess. These are awarded by teachers and distributed at the whole school assembly which is held each Monday morning

Aussies of the Term – These certificates are a given at assembly at the end of each term. They are presented by a person of note from the community. Students who excel in a certain area for the whole term are awarded with this.

Educational Support Staff – as part of the Department of Education and Training's (DET) Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) Education Support Staff are employed to assist in meeting the specialised learning needs of particular students. These students are also supported by an IEP and regular Student Support Group (SSG) meetings involving parents, the classroom teacher, Assistant Principal and the integration aide (as required).

Puberty/Human Relationships Program – this is conducted by appropriate educational staff and is provided to the Year 5 and Year 6 students every second year.

Additional programs: Additional programs include: Literacy/Numeracy Intervention, EAL support, Educational Speech Pathologist one-on-one support, individual extra-curricular music lessons, structured lunchtime activities and after school extra-curricular activities.

Positive Partnerships: Through Positive Partnerships training the staff are able to provide a range of programs and resources to support students on the autism spectrum in the classroom and other school contexts, and create an 'autism friendly' school culture. We ensure we deliver practical ways to strengthen partnerships between parents and school staff and promote improved learning outcomes for students on the autism spectrum.

Rights and Responsibilities

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.

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.

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. It 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 DET employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions.

Everyone within our community therefore should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and

- Respect and promote human rights

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 and provides guidance for schools on:

- the rights of students with disabilities
- the legal obligations on education providers
- some of the measures that would demonstrate compliance.

The Standards apply to all students with disabilities, not just those who are eligible for support under targeted funding programs. Additional resources provided to schools do not define or limit the support provided for student disabilities

As 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.

We are committed to embedding inclusive education in to our school environment for students with disabilities and additional needs.

Bullying and harassment

Definitions:

<u>Harassment</u> is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

<u>Cyberbullying</u> 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 our 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 the incident was witnessed and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. If the student's friend is harassing another person they are to let that person 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)
Includes:

• 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)
Includes:

- 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:

- Being aware of the language used and the things that are said
- Respecting peoples' property (e.g. copyright)
- Visiting appropriate places.

Behaving safely online means:

- Protecting your own privacy and personal information.
- 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 any member of our school community is being harassed or bullied they should:

- Tell the person they don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a teacher or the Principal.
Concerns will be taken seriously and all complaints will be treated confidentially.

The following rights and responsibilities apply to all members of the Brandon Park Primary School Community:

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have a right to:	Students have a responsibility to:
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 and to attend regularly and on time. 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.
Participate fully in the school's educational program	
	Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to

Be valued for their individual differences	an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.
Have their growth and achievement recognised and celebrated	Understand that there will be consequences for their actions.
Have access to 'state of the art' technology.	Tell a teacher if they can't resolve an issue by amicable discussion
	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.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Rights	Responsibilities
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.	Parents/carers have a responsibility to: 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 and that they arrive at school on time 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.

	Inform and prepare their child for "on-line communities"

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers and Other Staff

Rights	Responsibilities
Teachers have a right to: 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 All staff have the right to: Develop their professional knowledge Work in conditions which are conducive to best possible practice	Teachers have a responsibility to: Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively in a manner which will cater for their academic, emotional, social and physical development. Know the content they teach. Know their students. Plan and assess for effective learning. Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. Foster authentic, collaborative learning opportunities Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning. Make safe and ethical behaviours part of lessons involving the use of the Internet and e-mail. All Staff have the responsibility to: Care and respect the rights, opinions and property of themselves, students, colleagues, community members, visitors and the school itself.

	Co-operate with colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required and enable effective communication throughout the school.
	Respect the position of all staff members in the school and community. Conduct which substantially brings the name of the school into disrepute or which seriously undermines confidence and position in the staff member, student or stakeholder will not be tolerated.
	Help make our school a happy learning environment
	Display the highest possible standards of professional behaviour that is required in an educational establishment.
	Use empathy and care in providing support for students, colleagues and stakeholders.
	Meet deadlines and work expectations.
	Model relationships between staff, students and stakeholders based on mutual respect.

School Actions and Consequences

At Brandon Park student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required.

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with when dealing with students

misdemeanours. Restorative Practices:

- Are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness Promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy
- Involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution.
- Promote relationship management rather than behaviour management.
- Separate the deed from the doer.
- Are concerned with establishing relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied.

There are still consequences for inappropriate behaviour, they are incremental (a staged response) and applied fairly and consistently. Equal emphasis is also placed on issuing positive consequences for meeting high expectations. Actions and consequences that isolate a student from learning are avoided where possible. To further develop positive behaviours with relationship based whole-school and classroom practices we:

- Establish predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments using norms and protocols.
- Ensure student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- Provide personalised learning programs, where appropriate, for individual students
- Consistently acknowledge all students
- Empower students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in authentic decision-making
- Provide physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning.

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- Understanding the student's background and needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student's learning program.
- Broader support strategies will include Involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- Mentoring and/or counselling
- Involving community support agencies.

Discipline Procedures – Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension is the process of excluding a student from the standard instruction or educational opportunities being provided to other students at the school for part of a day, a full day, or multiple days.

It is a serious disciplinary measure and is best reserved for incidents where other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. Before considering a suspension, we first seek to understand the

reasons for a student's behaviour and consider alternative educational and wellbeing supports and interventions that can be provided to the student to effectively address the reasons.

The procedures for suspension are set out in Ministerial Order1125 and detailed further on the DET website.

On rare occasions, when an individual student's behaviour may compromise the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff and is of a great magnitude, an expulsion maybe considered.

Deciding to expel a student is rare. If this decision is made, the principal and Department will work closely with the student and their family. They will ensure the student and family are supported to successfully transition to a new educational setting as soon as possible.

REVIEW CYCLE:
This policy was last updated December 2018 and is scheduled for review in 2020