



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION POLICY

October 2017

RATIONALE

Engagement, inclusion, behaviour and attendance are important aspects of students' lives that can impact significantly on their learning and the learning of others. Clear expectations allow all members of the school community to support the school's purpose of ensuring optimal outcomes for all students.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy* is to articulate the school community's expectations in the areas of student engagement, attendance, inclusion and behaviour. The policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of every member of the school community in regards to engaging in and promoting a safe and inclusive educational environment where student outcomes are optimal.

OUR VALUES

Within the Clifton Hill Primary School community we foster resilience through teaching and modelling the following values:

- Kindness and Empathy
 - We speak and act with consideration, friendliness and respect.
 - We try our best to understand the feelings and experiences of others.
- Gratitude
 - We show appreciation for what we have and what others do for us, and we give back in return.
- Inclusiveness
 - We embrace difference, treat people fairly and create opportunities so that everyone feels like they belong.
- Critical and Creative Thinking
 - We question and analyse the world, and we look for new and innovative ideas and solutions.

IMPLEMENTATION

The *Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy* is a shared responsibility between school, home and the school community. This policy is divided into the following sections that outline the way in which Clifton Hill Primary School (CHPS) community seeks to achieve the purpose of this policy:

1. School Profile Statement
2. Rights and Responsibilities
3. Creating a Positive and Engaging School Culture
4. Responding to the individual needs of all students
5. Unacceptable Behaviour
6. Bullying
7. Responding to unacceptable behaviour
8. Promoting School Attendance
9. Guidelines
10. Review



1. SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

Information about the environmental context of CHPS is updated annually as part of our annual reporting process and can be found on the school website:

<http://www.cliftonhillps.vic.edu.au/main/about/vision>

2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy recognises student, staff and parent/carer rights and responsibilities.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students have the right to:

- Learn in a dynamic and nurturing environment
- Experience success
- Be treated fairly and with respect by all members of the school community
- Receive assistance from others
- Have privacy respected
- A secure and happy environment
- Be individuals
- Feel free to express themselves
- Talk about their problems
- Be listened to
- Expect their property to be safe
- Expect that bullying will not be tolerated

All students have the responsibility to:

- Allow others to learn
- Strive for their personal best
- Respect and value others
- Accept and abide by school rules
- Set a good example
- Cooperate with others
- Respect the privacy and property of others
- Ensure a safe, clean and happy school environment
- Encourage others to experience success
- Be punctual



Staff Rights and Responsibilities

All teachers and support staff have the right to:

- Have minimal disruptions to the teaching and learning process
- Be treated fairly and with respect by all members of the school community
- Be supported and assisted by other staff
- Appropriate support from the school community
- Privacy
- Appropriate Professional Development experiences

All teachers and support staff have the responsibility to:

- Provide effective teaching and learning practices
- Facilitate a physically and emotionally safe environment
- Pursue relevant continued learning opportunities relating to their own interests and areas of need and to the needs of the school
- Provide adequate supervision of students
- Support and encourage teaching colleagues and other school staff
- Encourage awareness and understanding of school rules
- Implement the Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- Request advice and assistance when needed

Parent/Carer Rights and Responsibilities

All parents/carers have the right to:

- Have access to staff at convenient, mutually agreed times
- Be informed and be given the opportunity to express themselves on matters of school policy
- Be consulted about serious, inappropriate behaviours involving their children
- Be treated fairly and with respect by all members of the school community
- Have privacy respected

All parents/carers have the responsibility to:

- Encourage appropriate behaviour in their children
- Support school staff in their efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Support school staff in discipline procedures associated with the implementation of the Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- Treat others as they would like to be treated themselves
- Collaboratively share responsibility with the school staff for their child's education



3. CREATING A POSITIVE AND ENGAGING SCHOOL CULTURE

This Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy is underpinned by the need to create a positive and engaging school culture. At CHPS we are committed to creating a positive school culture by:

- Establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers, students and parents
- Establishing a learning community that provides multiple and differentiated opportunities for students to experience success
- Valuing the diversity of our student population
- Developing a learning and teaching culture that promotes student belonging and connectedness
- Continuously monitoring student data to allow identification and early intervention for students at risk, students who require extension and students who require remedial support.

Promoting Positive Values and Behaviours

At Clifton Hill Primary School we promote positive values and behaviours through a whole-school focus, making connections between these values and the curriculum. This includes:

- Encouraging students to work collaboratively, taking responsibility for their own learning and participation at school.
- Incorporating resources such as Habits of Mind, Circle Time, Mindfulness Strategies for teaching and learning positive social and educational values and behaviours.
- Integrating other programs and practices such as: Prep and Grade Six transition programs; a buddy system; regular whole school assemblies; and a range of multi-age and extra-curricular activities offered during school hours.

Proactively Engaging with Parents/Carers

At CHPS we support the effective involvement of all families as equal partners in the education of children. All staff aim to contribute to a welcoming culture for parents/carers and families. This includes:

- Providing parents access to the school's Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- Facilitating effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- Providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers to contribute
- Involving families through home-reading and other curriculum-related initiatives
- Involving families as participants in school decision-making
- Providing opportunities to enhance parenting knowledge and skills

Linking to the Local Community

At CHPS we acknowledge that linking with the local community provides access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise that can build the capacity of our school to respond to the needs of our students. We aim to develop:

- Partnerships between schools and community-based service providers involving shared responsibility for addressing common areas of concern



- Collaboration with other schools through network and cluster arrangements

4. RESPONDING TO THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS:

CHPS is committed to providing the most engaging and effective learning environment possible for all students. Whilst many students will be adequately catered for within the standard classroom environment and curriculum, we acknowledge that many students have additional needs, either for support or extension. Our school is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of these students.

Students in need of additional support:

Coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies:

- Include input from staff, parents, students and other specialists
- Focus on students that are at a higher risk of disengagement from education
- Are targeted at students displaying underachievement in social and/or academic spheres, inappropriate coping skills, stress reactions, depressive symptoms

Students in need of extension:

It is expected that all students will be challenged and extended in their learning environment via a differentiated curriculum. Some additional extension activities are available in particular areas. Some of these are optional, others are activities that the teacher may recommend, usually in consultation with parents and carers. These activities may include but are not limited to:

- GATEWAYS programs
- International Competitions and Assessment for Schools (ICAS)
- Chess club, code club, lego club
- Drama club, musical groups, aerobics, running club
- A specialised curriculum for particular area of learning ie Maths
- Involvement in organising and performing in assemblies
- Peer support activities such as PAL

5. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The following behaviour is considered to be unacceptable:

- Any behaviour deemed as bullying (see Student Wellbeing Handbook)
- Fighting, or any other form of aggressive behaviour
- Throwing sand, stones or other dangerous objects
- Using or carrying weapons (sticks, knives, etc)
- Harassment (based on cultural, religious, race, sexual preference, gender or disability)
- Stealing
- Leaving the school ground or classrooms without permission
- Climbing trees, roofs or structures other than designated playground equipment
- Violence-based games



- Unacceptable use of technology (see Cyber-safety section)

Prevention

CHPS staff implement a range of early intervention strategies to support student engagement and to address individual barriers to learning. These prevention strategies:

- Provide appropriate feedback and motivation for the displaying of positive behaviours
- Define and teach school-wide and classroom expectations
- Establish school-wide and classroom consequences for inappropriate behaviour
- Establish school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/or behaviour difficulties
- Empower students by providing multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and become involved in decision-making
- Provide a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- Include the explicit teaching of social skills
- Provide cyber-safety education to students, parents and teachers. Teachers at all year levels provide cyber-safety education to their students.

Cyber-Safety

Cyber-safety is about keeping children safe online. It requires the direct support of the entire school community.

Schools and parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- help protect children from material online that is illegal or inappropriate for their age group
- understand what constitutes and help protect children from cyber-bullying
- promote the safe use of online resources and online spaces for students and teachers
- ensure that students and teachers have the skills to deal with the wide range and volume of material available online.

Potential dangers for students using the internet include:

- exposure to illegal and inappropriate material
- exposure to promotion of inappropriate social and health behaviours (technology addiction, anorexia, drug usage, underage drinking and smoking)
- physical danger
- financial risks
- harassment and bullying
- violation of privacy
- unreliable information



- spam
- computer viruses

The following behaviours constitute an unacceptable use of technology and therefore a breach of the school's Cyber-Safety Policy:

- Deliberately using technology to provide to a third party any private information that could be used to identify another member of the school community without that person's expressed permission. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: contact details (email and telephone); addresses; any other information that could be used to identify another member of the school community (e.g. photos).
- Using any form of technology to impersonate another member of the school community. This implies pretending to be someone else in scenarios such as using mobile phones, chat rooms, emails or social-networking sites.
- Using any form of technology to demean or disparage another member of the school community in a way which contravenes the CHPS Code of Conduct, specifically with regards to Bullying

6. BULLYING

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, with more power than another intentionally uses negative words and/or actions against that person, which causes distress and risks wellbeing. These behaviours are typically repeated. Bullying can be very harmful and may take a variety of forms:

Direct Physical bullying – which includes hitting, poking, tripping, pushing or repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings.

Direct Verbal bullying – which includes using negative words, repeatedly and intentionally to upset someone. This includes name-calling, insults, comments directed at non-conformity to gender norms, racist remarks and verbal abuse.

Indirect or Social bullying – which includes lying, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke, repeatedly mimicking someone and deliberately excluding someone so as to cause humiliation or embarrassment.

Cyber bullying – which includes intentional acts carried out by an individual or group, using electronic media repeatedly over time (see cyber-safety section).

What is NOT Bullying?

The following behaviours, although distressing and likely to require interventions, are not considered examples of bullying:

- Mutual arguments and disagreements
- Not liking someone



- Random or one-off events - Acts of meanness, spite, conflict, rejection, exclusion, physical harm and emotional aggression hurt people and can cause great distress, but are not automatically classified as bullying. Bullying involves deliberately causing this distress. These acts are typically repeated before being classified as bullying.

7. RESPONDING TO UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

This section should be read in conjunction with the CHPS Student Wellbeing Booklet which outlines specific strategies and responses to bullying.

Where possible teachers are encouraged, when dealing with disciplinary matters, to consult and collaborate with colleagues as a form of support and to encourage consistency in response to unacceptable behaviour. A classroom teacher is most likely to discuss unacceptable behaviour with some (or all) of the following colleagues:

- Colleagues teaching in the same year-level
- An integration aide working within their class
- Their section leader
- Assistant Principal or Principal
- A mentor or other respected colleague
- A member of the school's leadership team
- Specialist teachers

Teachers are provided with documentation, via the school's Shared Drive, to assist them in understanding what are acceptable processes for dealing with unacceptable behaviour. These documents include:

- CHPS Action Plan for Student Misbehaviour in the Yard
- Student Discipline and Behavioural Guidelines

These documents outline options and advice for teachers in regards to dealing with difficult behaviour and these options include but are not restricted to:

- Sending a student into a nearby classroom
- Sending a student to the Principal or Assistant Principal
- Informing and discussing the issue with parents and carers
- Placing incident details on Compass for staff who teach the student to access
- Discussing with and/or informing classroom teacher of misbehaviour if that behaviour has occurred with a Specialist teacher or in the yard



Clifton Hill Primary School expressly prohibits the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline.

Intervention

Clifton Hill Primary School utilises strategies including early interventions that:

- Are targeted, based on systematic collection and analysis of data and measurement of progress
- Teach and/or build positive social behaviours
- Predominantly involve the classroom teacher
- Address both academic and social strategies
- Involve partnerships with parents/carers

Student Support Group

As an element in a staged response, CHPS may utilise student support groups that:

- Identify the learning, social, emotional, behavioural and environmental needs of the child and the support or resources required for improvement
- Involve key specialist learning and wellbeing support staff
- Develop an Individual Learning Plan or Behaviour Management Plan with the student's classroom teacher/s and ensure support to implement the plan
- Support referrals to community agencies for specialist interventions delivered in partnership with the student support group

Suspension

A student may, by order of the Principal of a state school, be suspended if, whilst attending school or travelling directly to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travel organised by the school, the student does any of the following:

- Behaves in such a way as to constitute a danger to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person
- Commits an act of significant violence or causes significant damage or destruction to property, or is knowingly involved in the theft of property
- Processes, uses or deliberately assists others to use prohibited drugs or substances
- Fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher, support staff member or other adult
- Consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student or students
- Consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person

If a student is suspended, it should be for the shortest time necessary. The period of suspension should be used by the school, the student and the student's parents/carers as an opportunity to reflect on the present difficulties and develop positive, student-focused engagement strategies. Appropriate and meaningful schoolwork must be provided to the suspended student. At any time during a suspension, parents/carers can request that a student support group meeting be convened.

In-school Suspensions – this is when a student continues to attend school but is removed from their class and their usual activities for a designated period.



An in-school suspension can have a number of positive outcomes for the school and the student:

- The suspended students and the rest of the class can continue work, with disruption minimised
- Time can be allocated for support for the individual student their parents/carers (if appropriate)
- It allows out-of-school suspension to be used for the most extreme behavioural issues.

Expulsion

The School Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school according to the procedures set out below. Permanent expulsion from a school is the most extreme sanction open to a Principal. Except in the most unusual and extreme circumstances, it will only be used after other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in this policy have been exhausted.

The Principal can expel a student if, whilst attending school or directly travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travel organised by the school:

- The student does anything for which they could be suspended
- The student's behaviour is of such magnitude, that when comparing the student's educational needs with the need to maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students and the effectiveness of the school's educational programs, an expulsion is the only available mechanism.

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools and will not be used at CHPS under any circumstances.

8. PROMOTING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Whilst student attendance at school is a legal obligation of parents/carers, staff members at CHPS community are committed to providing active support for full student attendance.

School approach

CHPS utilises the following whole-school strategies to promote school attendance:

- Setting and communicating high expectations for attendance to all members of the school community
- Adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences.
- Following up student absences promptly and consistently
- Creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning
- Providing early identification of and immediate supportive intervention for students at risk of non-attendance

Expectations for attendance – Parents

Parents/carers are required to:

- Ensure that their child is on time for school each day
- Promote and provide organisational support to their child for full attendance and participation at school on all designated school days



- Notify the school of their child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of the child's absence
- Notify the school in advance if an absence of any period is planned
- Support their child's learning during continued or prolonged absences through the implementation of a Student Absence Learning Plan
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance has been inconsistent due to reasons deemed unsatisfactory by the school
- Work cooperatively with the school in supporting the child to return to school after prolonged absence
- Ensure that all contact details are correct and up to date

Expectations for attendance – Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school at all times when the school is open for instruction
- Arrive on time to school and to every class
- Provide a written explanation from their parents/carers to their teachers when they have been absent from school
- Remain on the school premises during school time unless they have permission to leave from both the school and their parents/carers
- Work cooperatively with the school to develop personal attendance improvement goals and strategies when their attendance has been inconsistent

9. GUIDELINES

This policy is based upon the following documents, programs and resources:

- *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools. Student Engagement Policy Guidelines. Promoting student engagement, attendance and positive behaviours in Victorian government schools* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)
- AITSL Australian Professional Standards for teachers
- The Victorian Curriculum
- Clifton Hill Primary School Strategic Plan
- Teacher reference materials
- The National Centre Against Bullying

10. REVIEW

This policy is part of the School's Accountability and Improvement Framework. It will be reviewed annually as a component of the strategic planning process. This will ensure school strategic and annual implementation plans continue to reflect changing approaches to student engagement, attendance, inclusion and positive behaviour.

REVIEW: October 2018