

# Student Engagement Policy Brighton Primary School 1542

## **Purpose of this policy**

The purpose of this Student Engagement Policy is to articulate the expectations and aspirations of the school community in relation to student engagement, attendance and behaviour. The policy supports the rights and outlines the expectations of every member of the school community to engage in and promote a safe and inclusive educational environment.

## **Table of Contents**

The implementation of the Student Engagement 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 Brighton Primary School community seeks to achieve the purpose of this policy.

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## **1. School Profile**

Information about the school profile can be accessed on the Brighton Primary School website.

<http://www.brighton.vic.edu.au/>

## **2. School Mission and Vision**

As an internationally minded school, our reputation stands on honouring our history, focusing on the present and preparing for the future. We believe that the growth of our children is at the heart of our community. By focusing on the whole child, we facilitate a sense of belonging and achievement through powerful interactions with other learners through rich learning tasks. Our school culture of shared responsibility and collaboration ensures that the Hearing Unit functions as an integral part of the school community, supporting students into fully access mainstream education. We value our colleagues as reflective educators who are open to new ideas and focused on best practice as they educate our students to develop as critical thinkers and lifelong learners. We are committed to highly effective learning and teaching which is built on relational trust. We have positioned ourselves globally through our membership of Council of International Schools and Primary Years Program ensuring we develop global citizens.

Brighton Primary is a community of:

- Critical thinkers
- Interactive learners
- Global citizens

### **3. Engagement Strategies**

The foundation of our positive school culture is the active participation of all members of the school community so they feel valued, safe and secure; are provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school; and have every opportunity to meet their personal and educational potential.

A key component of the Brighton's approach to prevention is teaching positive behaviours that are embodied in the International Baccalaureate learner profile and are underpinned by the attitudes of the Primary Years Program. Our values are actioned by agreed norms. The focus is on the collective good with the common understanding that every teacher is the teacher of every student at Brighton Primary School. Our focus is on the use Restorative Practices and the use of logical consequences to address appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

The Brighton Primary School Council and leadership team regularly consult with students, parents/carers, support organisations and the broader community to ensure we are responsive to students' social, emotional, cognitive and cultural needs.

Through the inquiry of Primary Years Program and the Junior School Council student voice is acknowledged in the planning and delivery of curriculum. There is a student leadership program and significant rite of passage celebrated as students' progress through the school:

- Kindergarten to Prep transition
- Prep 100 day celebrations
- Grade 3 and 4 Film Festival alternate years to the musical production
- Grade 4 and 5 musical production alternate years
- Grade 6 Exhibition
- Whole school transition program in November

Brighton Primary School continues to build on the opportunities for our students to take on meaningful responsibilities both within the school and the broader community.

Our positive school culture is also predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, the school leadership team is actively engaged in developing effective classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse individual learning needs. A professional learning community of life-long learners facilitates the building of respectful relationships, a deep understanding of pedagogy and improved teaching and learning practice. An inclusive and engaging curriculum incorporating the Primary Years Program and Council of International Schools, AusVELS Essential Learning Standards ensures that teaching and learning practice is in line with the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

#### **Prevention Programs**

At Brighton Primary School we work together as a whole school community to ensure a preventative school culture by providing programs and practices including the Student Leadership Teams, a whole school Buddy Program, a whole school Transition Program, a comprehensive Kindergarten to Prep Transition Program, Reading Recovery, Learning Support, Life Education, School Captains, Student Led Assembly, Junior School Council, Friendship Stop, Peer Mediation, a Student Wellbeing Team, Oz Child psychologist and DET Student Support Officer.

### Inclusion, Wellbeing & Transitions

Brighton Primary School has a proactive approach to student health with the continued provision of a full-time school nurse and level 2 first aid trained staff. In addition, staff is trained annually in the management and treatment of asthma and anaphylaxis.

Sunsmart School. The school promotes sun smart behaviours with the wearing of hats for all outside activities in terms 1 and 4 and in terms 2 and 3 on days of higher UV ratings. The school nurse is responsible for alerting staff of high UV rating days.

### Parent Participation

Parent participation is important and we are continuously reviewing our Parent Participation Policy, in line with current research on home school partnerships and its impact on student learning and engagement.

### Support Services

A close relationship has been established with a number of support agencies including the Bayside Council, Oz Child psychologist, Alfred CYMHS and DET Student Support Service Officers (SSSO) staff who actively contributes as members of the school community.

### Professional Learning

Teacher professional learning is given high priority at Brighton Primary School to ensure that teaching and learning approaches are based on deep level pedagogical understanding and are reflective of best practice. Peer Observation and team teaching are opportunities for teachers to learn with, from and on the behalf of each other. Improvement to teaching and learning is supported by modelling of best practice, underpinned by current research facilitated by consultants David Anderson and Michael Ymer. Ongoing professional learning in DET initiatives and school based priorities will continue to be a focus at Brighton Primary School.

### Collaboration and Communication

At Brighton Primary School we have a school wide understanding of the positive impact of parent's involvement in the development of student's behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement with learning. We foster a collaborative approach with parents through Compass, student planners, pastoral care interviews, individual learning improvement plan interviews, reports, newsletters, educational forums, parent-teacher interviews, phone calls and student support meetings.

## **4. Identifying Students in Need of Extra Support**

At BPS we use the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra support:

- Information gathered on enrolment
- Attendance data
- Academic performance
- Classroom observation
- Engagement with the family
- Assessments from other agencies
- Information from other support agencies

## **5. Shared Behaviour Expectations**

Brighton Primary School has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. This process is undertaken at the beginning of each year where a staff essential agreement is co constructed with staff and a classroom essential agreement is co constructed with students and the classroom teacher. The expectations are intended to be positive and set out the appropriate behaviours for our school community.

Our shared expectations are intended to support staff, students and families from a diverse range of backgrounds, communities and experiences. Refer to Appendix 1: Rights and Responsibilities

## **6. School Actions**

Each teacher co-creates a class Essential Agreement with the students. The Essential Agreement describes the way students and teachers in the class want to be treated and how everyone will work in the space. It is displayed prominently in the classroom for easy and regular reference.

The Essential Agreement is underpinned by the attitudes of the Primary Years Program. These attitudes are Appreciation, Commitment, Confidence, Cooperation, Creativity, Empathy, Enthusiasm, Independence, Integrity, Respect and Tolerance.

At Brighton Primary School, our overarching and connecting value is respect and this has to be included in all Essential Agreements. It is our core value and needs to be displayed in all spaces.

It is the teachers' and the students' shared responsibility to hold each other accountable to the class essential agreement. If students do not meet the essential agreement, a consequence will be put in place. This could be losing time at recess or lunch to complete work or walking with the teacher on duty.

Students have a responsibility to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. If a student disrupts others' learning and loses the right to remain in the classroom, he/she is sent to a swap class. The most effective use of a swap class is to arrange one that is not in your year level.

If a student is having difficulty settling into the class and understanding routines, the parents will be contacted and meetings will be set up to assist the student.

### **Appropriate Behaviour**

Brighton Primary School will acknowledge students who meet the shared expectations outlined in this policy through recognition and encouragement.

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

The restorative approach is used to address student behaviour in various settings and levels to:

- re-establish significant relationships
- ensure consequences for misbehaviour are relevant and meaningful
- foster and develop individual responsibility and empathy

Refer to Appendix 2: Staged Response to Behaviour Issues

Refer to Appendix 3: Bullying

Refer to Appendix 4: Responding to breaches of Behaviour Expectations

## **7. Engaging with Families**

At BPS we value parent input and seek feedback through the Parent Opinion survey and from parent representatives on School Council. The School Council provides financial assistance and encouragement to the Parents Association in our efforts to build a sense of community. We provide an environment that welcomes all parents/carers as partners in the student's learning.

The school will create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

- publishing the BPS Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school/home communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers to contribute
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- involve families in Student Support Groups

## 8. Evaluation

Data will be collected regularly in relation to student engagement and student wellbeing.

Some sources of data may include data from:

- the Attitude to School survey
- school reports
- CASES21
- Compass
- SOCS
- the Parent survey
- case management work with students

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Rights and Responsibilities

Brighton Primary School and members of the school community follow its legal obligations under relevant legislation including The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic), which states that all Victorians, irrespective of the education and training institution they attend, where they live or their social or economic status, should have access to a high quality education.

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected attributes (characteristics) including race, religion, disability, sex, age, gender identity and sexual orientation.

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic), which 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.

#### **All students have the right to:**

- learn and socialise without interference or intimidation in a safe and secure environment
- be treated with respect and fairness as individuals
- expect a learning program that meets their individual needs

#### **All staff have the right to:**

- expect to be able to work in an atmosphere of order and cooperation
- use discretion in the application of rules and consequences
- receive respect and support from the school community

#### **All parents have the right to:**

- know that their children are in a safe, happy learning environment where they are treated fairly and with respect.
- expect a positive and supportive approach to their child's learning
- expect communication and participation in their child's education and learning.

#### **All members of the BPS community have a right to:**

- fully participate in an environment free of discriminatory behaviour including racist, sexist, ability-based, class-based and homophobic forms of harassment, bullying, vilification, violence, intimidation, abuse and exclusion
- be treated with respect and dignity.
- feel valued, safe and supported in an environment that encourages freedom of thought and expression.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The School**

#### **Engagement**

The School will:

- uphold the right of every child to receive an education up to the compulsory age of schooling.
- ensure the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligations under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation
- collaborate with the Brighton Primary School community to develop policies and procedures consistent with its values and aspirations and DET Guidelines.
- collaborate to identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning, educational and co-curricular activities, facilities, student services and community linkages which are inclusive and responsive to student needs

Teachers at BPS will:

- develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage different learners
- deliver curriculum and assessment that challenges and extends students learning
- develop positive and meaningful relationships with students that promote engagement, wellbeing and learning
- provide opportunities for student voice to develop a positive school culture in and outside the classroom

#### **Attendance**

In compliance with departmental procedures school staff will:

- promote regular attendance by all members of the school community
- monitor and follow up on absences

#### **Behaviour**

Brighton Primary School will support and promote positive behaviours by developing and implementing shared behavioural expectations with the school community that deliver whole-school responses to behavioural issues. All members of school community are expected to participate in the educational environment with curiosity, enthusiasm and mutual respect. Brighton Primary School is committed to engaging all students and will only exclude students as a matter of last resort in extreme circumstances.

The school will:

- work to provide an appropriate and engaging curriculum for all students
- lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues by incorporating student wellbeing at the centre of school business
- monitor the profile of behaviour issues at the school and the effectiveness of implemented strategies
- provide appropriate professional learning opportunities for all staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours.

Teachers at BPS will:

- understand and accept that all children can learn
- demonstrate a commitment to the home/school partnership
- use the Student Engagement policy as a basis for negotiating an essential agreements and class norms
- teach students social competencies through curriculum content and pedagogical approach;

- employ behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviours expected from students and which focus on supporting positive behaviours
- build a collegiate atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and support each other to reflect on one's own behaviour management approach
- involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary
- involve other school personal where necessary.

## **Students**

### **Engagement**

All students at BPS are expected to:

- adhere to the classroom essential agreements and school values
- respect, value and learn from the differences of others
- have high expectations that they can learn
- reflect on and learn from their own differences.

### **Attendance**

All students are expected to come to school every day that the school is open to students. If students can't come, they must provide an explanation from their parents/carers to their teacher. Students should arrive at each class on time and ready to learn.

### **Behaviour**

Students are expected to:

- support each other's learning by behaving in a way that is curious and respectful according to their school learner profile and attitudes of the PYP and behavioural expectations
- have high expectations that they can learn
- be considerate and supportive of others
- demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contributes to a positive school environment that safe, inclusive and happy
- understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable.

## **Parents and Carers**

### **Engagement**

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- support the school's efforts to educate young people to live in a diverse world by promoting an understanding and appreciation of diversity in the home
- help the school to provide student-centered responses by providing all relevant information to the school
- actively participate in supporting their child's learning by building a positive relationship with the school through attendance at student parent-teacher meetings, student activities, school celebrations, student support groups and responding to communications including the student dairy/planner in a timely manner

### **Attendance**

Parents/carers are expected to ensure that enrolment details for their children are correct, that their children attend school regularly and that, when a child is absent from school, parents/carers advise the school as soon as possible in writing. For effective student learning it is critical for students to be at school on time and on task.

## Behaviour

Parents/carers should understand the school's behavioural expectations and work with it to promote a consistent approach that supports their child's learning and engagement.

### Appendix 2: Staged response to behaviour issues

A restorative practice question approach is built upon the following key questions:

When things go wrong	When someone has been hurt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What happened?</li><li>- What were you thinking at the time?</li><li>- What have you thought about since?</li><li>- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?</li><li>- What do you think you need to do to make things right?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What did you think when you realized what had happened?</li><li>- What impact has this incident had on you and others?</li><li>- What has been the hardest thing for you?</li><li>- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?</li></ul>

#### A Staged Response

- This approach will be conducted in an informal way for minor incidents and be embedded in classroom teaching and learning.
- Serious incidents will require a more formal restorative session that involves Student Wellbeing Team (Assistant Principal), Principal, and Leading Teachers and if necessary the DET Student Support Officer and all persons affected in the incident. The response will be documented.
- There will be situations where a formal conference involving the before mentioned people: parents, support persons and convener will be required (Student Support Group). Any imposed consequence will be imbedded in the restorative process that requires a response 'that makes things right' in relation to those who have been affected.
- Where a restorative approach has previously been conducted and subsequently the behaviour continues, the school will constitute a further Student Support Group to devise strategies and approaches to address the behaviour. This may include intervention from specialist services and external agencies in the local community and the development of an Individual Behaviour Management Plan.

### Appendix 3. Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by one person or a group towards others which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or cause discomfort.

#### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. Direct physical bullying

This form includes hitting, tripping and pushing or damaging property.

2. Direct verbal bullying

This form includes name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

### 3. Indirect bullying

This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Some examples might include:

- lying and spreading rumours
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages or chat rooms

#### **What bullying is not**

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying.

#### 1. Mutual conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students and not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

#### 2. Social rejection or dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

#### 3. Single-episode acts

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students.

Bullying is different from simple social rejection, one off aggression/nastiness and mutual conflict. Bullying is a repeated unjustifiable behaviour that may be physical, verbal and/or psychological that is intended to cause fear, distress or harm to another. It is conducted by a more powerful individual or group against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist. Bullying occurs to some extent in all schools. The effects of bullying on both the student being bullied and the student engaging in the bullying behaviour, show a need for intervention in social skills development in young children and the need for the creation of safe environments.

At Brighton Primary School we have a strong commitment to prevent and minimise bullying in the school. We are committed to the use of a combination of many approaches as we believe there is no one simple strategy to achieve a safe and harmonious environment.

#### **Cyber Bullying**

Please refer to the BPS Acceptable Use Agreement and e Smart Policy.

## Appendix 4: Responding to breaches of Behaviour Expectations

Inappropriate Behaviour may be addressed by:

- talking to the student and referring them to the shared expectations
- discussing appropriate behaviours in the classroom
- contact with parents
- making changes to the student's learning program to better equip him/her to behave positively
- implementing restorative practices
- conferencing: apology
- action to make it right agreed too (may include clean up damage to property)
- asking the student to undertake tasks designed to better equip them to behave positively in the future
- counselling
- appropriate behaviours taught and agreed to
- payment for damage sought.
- withdraw privileges, e.g. walk with the duty teacher, lose the right to be in the playground
- withdraw student temporarily from class – swap grade
- holding Student Support Group meetings
- giving the student 'time-out' – gradual reintroduction using a planned response
- negotiating alternative pathways or settings for student; or as a matter of last resort, suspension or expulsion.
- creating Individual Behaviour Management Plans in consultation with parents, student and teachers

### Ongoing Behaviour issues, including challenging behaviours

Where students exhibit ongoing behaviour patterns as part of staged response, a range of strategies will be used. These may include the following.

- Discussing the behaviour problems and reaching an agreement for future behaviour.
- Explicit Teaching of appropriate behaviours.
- Monitoring and providing feedback.
- Time Out allowing students a "Cooling Off" period.
- Withdrawal a student may be withdrawn from an activity, class– swap grade, camp or excursion due to inappropriate behaviour and or be provided with an alternative educational setting within the school.
- Counselling for individuals in order to modify inappropriate behaviour.
- Wellbeing /Student Support Group Meeting involving parents/caregivers and/or relevant DET support staff, outside agencies to assist with modifying the behaviour.
- Withdrawal from playground will be given to a student for seriously compromising the safety of themselves or others and/or continual misconduct. Parents/caregivers will be informed and a further meeting arranged to discuss behaviour or to draw up a Behavioural Plan (where necessary).
- Suspension & Expulsion: For serious disciplinary measures we follow DET Student Inclusions and Engagement Guidance, developed in response to Ministerial Orders No.184 and 625.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the DET School Engagement Policy guidelines  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx>

This policy was last ratified by School Council in 2016

Review in 2019.