Hazelwood North Primary School

Student Engagement
&
Wellbeing Policy

**Produced in consultation
with the school community**

To be read in conjunction with
*Effective Schools are Engaging Schools –
Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

Revised August, 2016

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School Council President: Felicity Di Toro**

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1 School profile statement

Hazelwood North Primary School is located in a pleasant rural environment, approximately 5 km from Morwell and 10km from Traralgon in the Latrobe Valley.
The school is part of the Morwell Cluster and Churchill Sub Cluster.
The majority of students live in Hazelwood North; students also travel to the school from Morwell and Churchill.

The main aim of our strategic plan is to improve student performance in both English and Mathematics.
The school welcomes parental participation in classroom, specialist and extra-curricular activities.
We are fortunate to have supportive and hardworking School Council and Parents' Club.
We are proud of:

- our committed teachers and support staff
- our strongly supportive parent community
- our students
- our classroom, specialist and programs for students with disabilities
- the range of extra-curricular activities we provide.

School Vision:
Hazelwood North Primary School aims to promote the development of students as independent, lifelong learners. The prime focus of our school is to provide a comprehensive learning program for every student enabling them to achieve their social, emotional and academic potential.

Values:
Hazelwood North Primary School community values:

- *Collaboration*
- *Challenge*
- *Curiosity*
- *Resilience*
- *Responsibility*

School Facilities

- Construction of a multipurpose hall has been completed and provides an excellent facility for assemblies, wet weather activities and performances.
- A three classroom and flexible learning building has also been recently constructed and allows for greater flexibility in student learning spaces.
- Another building recently completed allows for art/craft, house teacher resources and a student kitchen where cooking activities can take place.
- Landscaping, ICT provision and furnishing of the new buildings will be priorities in the coming year with a whole school plan being developed in cooperation with staff, students and wider school community.

School Programs
The aim of all school programs is to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment.
As part of our Strategic Plan a particular curriculum focus will involve the use of rich learning

tasks with an emphasis on developing students understanding of how they learn and how they can apply their knowledge.

A broad teaching program is offered in the curriculum areas with the AusVels currently being implemented and a transition to Victorian Curriculum will begin in 2016. Specialist programs are offered in The Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Physical Education.

Education support is provided through a part time teacher and Aides where a focus is on supporting children with additional needs.

2 Whole-school prevention statement

Hazelwood North Primary School uses a range of strategies and programs to enable students to develop a sense of self-worth and resilience to be able to operate in a school that provides secular education which is equally open and accessible to all. It means children are more likely to encounter people who don't share their background, or their religion, or their parents' assumptions or privileges. In forming relationships in that context, they learn and develop skills and attitudes that are fundamental in developing understanding of others and a way of operating in society. Hazelwood North Primary School prohibits corporal punishment as a form of dealing with discipline issues.

At Hazelwood North all children are given the opportunity to engage in the varied activities and programs on offer and develop relationships with staff and with students. The activities that all children participate in include the extensive camping program which ranges from overnight stays, to environmental camps, to capital city experience camps. Classes are involved in House Team programs to allow older and younger children the chance to interact, form friendships, and help each other.

Paraprofessionals such as Psychologists, Speech therapists and Counsellors are used on a regular basis to support the children in need of these services and to support teachers in developing learning activities and opportunities for the children in their care

Lunch and recess times can be a time that children find difficult and it is important that students are supported during this time as well. Teaching staff regularly patrol the playground areas to ensure student safety, in addition to this support staff support individual students needs during this time to enable them to enjoy their time at play. Other staff members open the library at these times for students to use and regular supervised games are also organised for children to participate in.

Students are also able to access other initiatives and hold positions with roles and responsibilities such as School Captains and House Captains and Junior School Council. These give children a voice and support the development of leadership skills.

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 deliberate repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyber bullying 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 they witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if a student's friend is harassing another person, the student needs to 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, texts, messages 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
• being a bystander and not speaking up to stop acts of bullying.

Cyber bullying

Being involved in online spaces and using electronic communication devices – 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 (always with respect)
• respecting people's property (eg copyright)
• visiting appropriate sites.

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). Never give out someone else's telephone number, address or any other 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.

3.6 Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Hazelwood North Primary school has high behavioural expectations of all students who attend the school. We do not tolerate bullying or exclusion or being a bystander allowing bullying to happen. Students are encouraged and expected to take responsibility for their own actions. We expect that all students:
- will treat one another in a way they would like to be treated.
- have a clear understanding of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
- be part of the problem solving process.

We are confidently able to contact parents to assist/support possible outcomes/consequences of inappropriate behaviour. At Hazelwood North Primary School we are all responsible for monitoring the behaviour and wellbeing of our students. Teachers will refer to the Principal if they feel they need further support enforcing outcomes. Parents know that the school will contact them in the event of behaviour management or student wellbeing.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have a right 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	Students have a responsibility to: • 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, which 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 self-managers 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 and supported.	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 • 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
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	Teachers have a responsibility to • 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. • Develop positive and respectful relationships with all key stakeholders.

4. Shared expectations

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

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

To achieve these expectations the School provides:
- 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.

5. School actions and consequences

5.1 Discipline Procedures
Where an incident occurs that requires intervention from a staff member, it is that staff member's responsibility to ensure action is taken. In the case of a minor incident this can usually be dealt with by that intervening staff member. In more serious cases the incident may be referred to the student's particular classroom teacher and/or the Educational Team Leader or to the Principal. In these more serious cases parents are generally notified of the incident and the consequences. Notification to parents of children involved in incidents that are of a more serious or repeated nature will usually be done via a phone call or asking parents to attend a meeting.

Attendance can be an issue with some children or families. Where irregular attendance occurs parents are contacted to investigate the situation, and where needed support is given to the child/family to help with regular attendance. In some cases this may mean picking up children by staff members or in extreme cases other support agencies may be contacted.

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

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,
- 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.

5.2 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.

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

- 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.

    Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

    The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the after school detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student

Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

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/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.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