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Student Engagement & Inclusion Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

(a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
(b) expectations for positive student behaviour
(c) support available to students and families
(d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Clayton North Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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PROFILE STATEMENT

Clayton North Primary School is located within the triangular-intersection of Dandenong Road, Clayton Rd and North Rd in the City of Monash. The location offers close access to a selection of government and private secondary schools and kindergartens. Excellent community facilities, including recreation parks, are nearby. The school has a brick building built in the late 1800s as well as state of the art classrooms built in a major upgrade in 2005. The school population has varied between 270 and 320 students over the past 4 years,

There is strong parental involvement in multicultural initiatives and events, such as Harmony Day, and other special projects such as improvements to gardens and grounds. Parents of grade 1/2 children have a direct involvement and participation in the Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) Program each morning.

Clayton North Primary School is a vibrant, dynamic school which receives strong community support and involvement from its dedicated teaching staff, its motivated student body and its very knowledgeable parent community (many of whom have a tertiary education). It is a school which fosters a great sense of belonging, resulting in all individuals within the school community feeling welcomed, supported and respected.

The School Family Occupation (SFO) density remains high (0.67), indicating a generally low socio-economic status (SES), and the Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) remains high with approximately 80% of our students who report a home language other than English. The majority of our students are from diverse racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Approximately 80% of our students speak another language at home and the school community boast 37 different languages. The school currently has one students who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage (February, 2020).

Within community interaction is a focal point in school programming and school members are actively encouraged to participate in school programs such as the Clayton North Breakfast Club, Multicultural Kitchen Garden and Literacy support. The school is developing stronger links with local community, from pre-schools right through to the senior citizens. Our parent body takes great pride in the role that Clayton North Primary School plays in the community and actively supports and encourages us in our endeavours.

Thirteen grades are organised into four departments. While three single-age prep grades operate, all remaining grades are composite groupings spanning two-year age groups. Where possible, grade numbers are kept as low as possible across the school. The state benchmark of a maximum of 21 students per grade from prep-year 2 has been generally adhered to throughout the previous charter. Specialist teachers conduct physical education, visual arts, EAL, Performing Arts and Japanese programs.

The Good Start Breakfast Club operates every morning, in association with the Red Cross and Sanitarium, and an After School Child Care Program is provided by Camp Australia.

SCHOOL VALUES, PHILOSOPHY AND VISION

Our Vision is to provide a dynamic learning environment that engages students who work to achieve their personal best in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation to become effective and productive members of the global society.

Clayton North Primary will be a place of excitement, optimism and strong positive relationships for children, teachers and parents. Children and teachers learn together in a rich 21st century learning environment. Children will see themselves as co-contributors, they will be actively involved in their learning, making decisions about how and what they learn, based upon their own understanding of where they are now and where they need to go.

We believe that explicit teaching of emotional intelligence should remain as a primary focus. Through the implementation of Circle Time and other relevant approaches, we aim to facilitate the development of children's emotional intelligence. Whilst the unique and individual qualities of every teacher in delivering the curriculum in their classroom is recognised and celebrated, the school will aim for consistency of teaching approaches in curriculum delivery across each year level as a further focus point. Having this as a primary focus will assist children's development in other areas such as, but not limited to, wellbeing, KidsMatter, Healthy Futures and specialist programs (PE, Visual Art, Performing Arts and Languages - Japanese).

Our teaching and learning philosophy supports Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians, in that:

All young Australians become:

- Successful learners;
- Confident and creative individuals;
- Active and informed citizens.

Successful Learners at Clayton North Primary School will:

- develop their capacity to learn
- play an active role in their own learning
- have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy and are creative and productive users of technology, especially ICT, as a foundation for success in all learning areas
- be able to think deeply and logically, and obtain and evaluate evidence in a disciplined way as the result of studying fundamental disciplines
- be creative, innovative and resourceful, and are able to solve problems in ways that draw upon a range of learning areas and disciplines
- be able to plan activities independently, collaborate, work in teams and communicate ideas
- be able to make sense of their world and think about how things have become the way they are
- be on a pathway towards continued success in further education, training or employment, and acquire the skills to make informed learning and employment decisions throughout their lives
- be motivated to reach their full potential and to move beyond their zone of proximal development.
- be able to communicate and manage their emotions
- be able to articulate their inner thoughts, feelings and emotions.

PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.

The school will:

- focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success.
- collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management approach.
- encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children.
- promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

PROGRAM

The curriculum programs of the school will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the school's students by:

- accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning.
- intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs.

The school is committed to the delivery of an inclusive curriculum that ensures all our students have access to a quality education to meet their diverse needs.

To improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities, the following key strategies are in place:

- providing parents/carers with a learning program that best suits their child's needs
- involving students and parents in programming and planning decisions
- supporting students access to programs that let them pursue achievable pathways
- ensuring the expertise of teachers working in our school is maintained and developed

Our school will implement a whole-school behaviour management approach that is based on pro-social values, social competencies, recognition and positive peer relationships.

The key focus will be on prevention and early intervention strategies that:

- define and teach school-wide and classroom expectations
- establish consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- establish school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/or behaviour difficulty
- provide school-wide and classroom processes for ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empower students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- provide a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

Involvement in our school by parents and carers helps children achieve the best possible learning outcomes. Parents and carers will be provided with the opportunity to participate in school life, both formally and informally, through school council, volunteering and staying up to date with news about what is happening in education via our newsletters, website and mobile app.

The school's strategies to promote pro-social values will be whole-school in focus and include close links with curriculum. The KidsMatter Primary initiative provides a framework to improve the mental health and wellbeing of primary students. The framework highlights the proven methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced kids.

The Victorian Curriculum includes the learning domain of Personal and Social Learning, which encourages students to work with others, and to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation at school. In the context of the Victorian Curriculum and KidsMatter, the school curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviours to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.

Student voice/student participation is about valuing people and valuing the learning that results when we engage the capacities and multiple voices in the school. It focuses on realising the leadership potential inherent within all learners. There are five dimensions to student participation:

- student involvement in school and community development
- students as researchers and co-enquirers
- student feedback on teaching and learning
- students as peer-tutors
- student involvement as a manifestation of inclusion principles

The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change. Student participation ranges from young people sharing their opinions of problems and potential solutions through a student representative council or in focus groups associated with school strategic planning. It also includes our students sharing their 'voice' by collaborating with teachers to actually improve education outcomes, including helping to improve teaching, curriculum and teacher-student relationships and leading to changes in student assessment.

The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning. The school will ensure that the unique experiences and skills of our students' families enrich the learning environment and the school community.

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

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- providing opportunities to enhance parenting knowledge and skills.

Implementing preventative and early intervention strategies to support positive behaviours is a key part of the Student Engagement Policy at our school. Prevention and early intervention strategies the school will deploy include:

- experiences and skills of our students' families enrich the learning environment and the school community.
- defining and teaching school-wide and classroom expectations
- establishing consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- establishing school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/ or behaviour difficulty
- providing school-wide and classroom processes for the ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

The school will promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

- articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
- adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
- following up student absences promptly and consistently
- implementing data-driven attendance improvement strategies
- creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning
- providing early identification of, and supportive intervention for, students at risk of non-attendance
- linking with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support
- providing a staged response.

The school will use coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. The school will provide the following support structures:

- monitoring of, and responding to, lengthy student absences
- trauma management plan
- protocol for mandatory reporting
- Student Support Group's for children in need
- bullying survey of students and school environment

The school will utilise relevant external student wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- DET-employed psychologist for psychological and academic assessment
- Medicare Local psychologists
- Kids Hope mentors – providing support for 'at risk' children
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- youth agencies
- local parent support groups
- relevant DET support staff
- C.A.S.A. [Centre Against Sexual Assault]
- School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)

Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program

- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Clayton North Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Clayton North Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- Time Out
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

1. Engaging with families

Clayton North Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.

- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

2. Evaluation

Clayton North Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Longitudinal data will be collected regarding frequency and types of welfare issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some sources of data are:

- Sentral Incident entries
- Anecdotal notes from teachers and welfare staff
- Reports from Primary Welfare Officer
- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- school level report data
- parent survey data
- data from case management work with students

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on February 2020 and is scheduled for review in February 2021.