



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT 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; and
- (d) Our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Diamond Creek 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.

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

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POLICY

1. School profile

Diamond Creek Primary School was established in 1870 and is situated in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. We are a small school of around 230 – 250 students in enrolment.

The school sets a clear vision that places students at the centre and embraces effective learning and teaching as its core purpose. Learning experiences are scaffolded, engaging and robust and are designed against rigorous standards and targets for student achievement.

The school aims to provide a stimulating, safe, happy and caring environment delivering quality education that promotes personal growth and enthusiastic learners. All students are given the opportunity for individual development in a supportive learning environment that encourages positive self-esteem, personal excellence and uniqueness. The school Values of Respect, Cooperation, Persistence and Striving for Excellence are used to prepare and support our students, as they become positive and thoughtful citizens within their community. The Values are the foundation to our school-based personal and social development programs.

The importance of learning is emphasised in our programming and students are encouraged to discover, question and create. A stimulating and varied curriculum caters for the individual learning needs of each student and provides many varied opportunities for success. Students are challenged and inspired to develop a lifelong engagement with learning and are supported by their achievements and effort being recognised and celebrated. Specific emphasis is placed on individual development in English and Mathematics and additional assistance and extension is offered to students in need.

The Inquiry process is the approach used to create authentic and engaging learning experiences across the whole curriculum, which connect with the interests and experiences of students. Programming is based on a Thinking Curriculum where learning styles are explored, and an

awareness of thinking developed. As successful learners, students develop the skills of critical and creative thinking. Programming encourages students to be enterprising and adaptable and to grow in confidence, enabling the use of purposeful higher-order thinking strategies.

Information and Communication Technologies are an integral part of student experiences where learning seamlessly extends beyond the local school environment to the broader global community. Modern, purposefully designed learning spaces promote a collaborative learning experience for students, enhanced by a plentiful array of technological tools in addition to our BYOD 1:1 iPad program for our year 5 and 6 students.

Complementing the high quality classroom curriculum is a comprehensive range of specialist programs, which incorporates The Arts, with dedicated classes in Language Arts (Italian), Visual Arts and Performing Arts (including Music and Drama) and also Library, Physical Education and Sport. Specialist teachers are provided in these curriculum areas where students are challenged to extend themselves through the outstanding programs provided.

In addition to this, Diamond Creek Primary School is a Science Specialisation school. This dimension has extended our learning and practices in science teaching and has also enhanced our children's engagement and achievement in science.

Diamond Creek Primary School is situated on a large and well-maintained allotment. There are five main buildings which were each constructed at different times, uniquely reflecting the history of the school's development. Students, families and staff are very proud of the attractive, natural school setting and the individuality of each of the buildings. The entire community works together to ensure they are well maintained, as are the grounds and picturesque gardens. The Diamond Creek Primary School grounds are spacious and generously provide room for all types of play and outdoor experiences.

Diamond Creek Primary School is committed to a dynamic learning community, fostering collaboration and a collective responsibility for all students. This is reinforced by strong and productive partnerships with families and the wider community.

Diamond Creek Primary School has developed close ties to the local community, and enjoys support from our local shops and community services.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Diamond Creek Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

*Diamond Creek Primary School sets a clear **vision** that places students at the centre and embraces high quality, effective learning and teaching as its core purpose. Our school's vision empowers students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults. We approach this by honouring our values of Respect, Cooperation, Persistence and Striving for Excellence, which are used as the foundation to developing the behaviour of all students, staff members, parents and associated community members.*

Our **mission** is to provide a stimulating, safe, happy and caring community school, delivering quality education that promotes personal growth and enthusiastic learners who will respond in an empathetic and thoughtful manner to new ideas and technologies within a rapidly changing world. This will be enabled by creating an innovative, high performing learning environment where lifelong learning and continuous improvement is nurtured and individual excellence and responsible global citizenship and leadership are encouraged.

Diamond Creek Primary School operates on the premise that everyone has the right to feel safe and to learn. The school **values** are used to support our students in becoming positive citizens within their community. We acknowledge the basis to successful learning is confidence, organisation, getting along, resilience and perseverance.

To support this foundation, our agreed **values** are:

Co-operation - working together

Respect - for ourselves and each other

Persistence - never giving up

3. Engagement strategies

Diamond Creek Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

Whole of school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion:

- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers;
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing;
- Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive;
- Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning;
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum including high quality specialist programs;
- Teachers at Diamond Creek Primary School use the Department of Education and Training Pedagogical Model (Victoria) to provide an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons;
- Teachers at Diamond Creek Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching;
- Our school's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community;
- Carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling;
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents;
- Monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level;
- Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council and through class and year level meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns;
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the Buddies program, athletics days, school concert and special activity days;
- All students are welcome to self-refer to their teacher, other staff members or the Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning;
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships; and
 - Bullying Prevention Initiatives.
- Programs and some incursions are developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. resilience and anger management programs);
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, some recess and lunchtime activities); and
- Buddy programs.

Targeted

- Connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer;
- All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment; and
- Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma.

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>;
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan;
- Program for Students with Disabilities;
- Referral to Student Support Services;
- Referral to ChildFirst, the Oragne Door, Headspace; and
- Lookout.

Diamond Creek Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These may include:

- Building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances;
- Meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school;
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan;
- Considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up; and
- Referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports (Kids Hope Mentors)
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst.

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- Being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing;
- Collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student;
- Monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family; and
- Running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - In Out of Home Care
 - And with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Diamond Creek Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Teachers plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Diamond Creek Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- Personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled;
- Attendance records;
- Academic performance;

- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation;
- Attendance, detention and suspension data;
- Engagement with families; and
- Self-referrals or referrals from peers.

5. 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; and
- 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; and
- 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.

6. 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 Diamond Creek Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Diamond Creek 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 other staff;
- Restorative practices;
- Detentions;
- Community service;
- Behaviour reviews;
- Suspension; and
- 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.

7. Engaging with families

Diamond Creek 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 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 home learning (homework) and other curriculum-related activities;
- Involving families in school decision-making;
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families; and
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Diamond Creek 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.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- Student survey data;
- Incidents data;
- School reports;
- Parent survey;
- Case management;
- CASES21; and
- SOCS.

RELATED RESOURCES

Diamond Creek Primary School's:

- *Statement of Values;*
- *School Philosophy;*
- *Bullying Prevention ; and*
- *Child Safe Standards.*

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy is listed for review as per the school's policy review schedule.