

Student Well Being 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
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Student engagement consists of three interrelated components: cognitive, emotional and behavioural. Cognitive engagement relates to a student's investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. Emotional engagement encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school. Behavioural engagement refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.

Skipton 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.

All classrooms had input into the creation of this policy. Student contributions have been collated and are attached at Appendix A.

OBJECTIVE

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.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Mentor and peer support
7. Student behavioural expectations
8. Engaging with families
9. Evaluation

POLICY

School profile

Skipton Primary School is a co-educational primary school located in Victoria's Western District, approximately two hour's drive west of Melbourne. The first Skipton School was established in 1858, with 22 pupils, and closed in March 1864. In October 1864 a new school, housed in a bluestone building by the river, was opened with 32 pupils enrolled. The school relocated to its' current site in 1888, and the purpose-built red brick classrooms are still in use. Additional classrooms and other buildings were added to the school as demand, driven by soldier settlement schemes and steady population growth, steadily rose until the mid-1980's.

Notable alumni include Sir Henry Bolte, Premier of Victoria 1955 to 1972, and Alan Connolly, Australian Test Cricketer.

Our school reflects the region's demographics and diversity, with predominately Australian and Great Britain ancestry, and English is the dominate language spoken at home. Our school makes a conscious and determined effort to expose students to other cultures and traditions, with specific reference to the traditional owners of the land on which our school is built.

In 2019 there are 96 students, 12 staff members, and an active parent and community group.

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

School values, philosophy and vision

Skipton 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, empathy and kindness at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy and resilient children. We create successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

Skipton Primary School enacts its vision through the values of:

- Be Respectful and Caring
- Be Responsible
- Be Healthy
- Lead and Achieve

Each value has been unpacked with students and staff under the headings; Looks like, Feels like and Sounds like, with examples of each.

Engagement strategies

Skipton 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

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents, carers and visitors
- 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 and 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 data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Skipton Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, the strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, in school assemblies and by communication to parents
- student attendance is monitored and attendance improvement strategies are implemented at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - The Resilience Project
 - Kids Matter
- opportunities for student inclusion such as sporting teams, photography competitions, craft groups, music and camps
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- the school runs a sustainability program designed to foster an understanding of the challenges that confront our environment and ways in which students can take an active role in meeting some of those challenges
- robust, well understood and reliable application of policies and strategies designed to minimise the impact of bullying, harassing or abusive behaviour

Targeted

- connect all indigenous students with an Engagement Support Officer from an appropriate language group
- 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
- staff will source and engage with specialist educators to undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see Student Support Group Policy
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities

Skipton Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent or carer to develop strategies to assist the student engage with the school
- development of an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- completing minor structural or environmental works if necessary and reasonable to do so
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - 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
- Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:
 - being sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing and initiating appropriate action
 - 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
 - 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

Identifying students in need of support

Skipton Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school community plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Skipton Primary School will use the following tools and collect information to assist with identifying 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
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

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.

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.

Mentor and peer support

Skipton Primary School has active and successful mentoring and peer support programs. The student mentoring program aims to promote school connectedness, engagement and aspirations. Each Prep and Year One student is given a “buddy”. The buddy is typically in Grade Five or Six. The buddy:

- ensures the new student is made familiar with the school surrounds
- welcomes and supports the new student
- increase their engagement with learning
- build self confidence and self esteem

The peer support program is structured within the classroom, a safe learning environment. It is designed to:

- achieve and maintain a positive school culture
- empower students to support each other and contribute positively to our school and community
- assist with student wellbeing and help develop a supportive learning environment

Student behavioural expectations

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Skipton 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
- restorative practices
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in some 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.

Engaging with families

Skipton Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we 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

Evaluation

Skipton 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
- SOCS

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 19th August 2019 and is scheduled for review in 2021.

Appendix A

This policy deals with student inclusiveness, empowerment and positive contributions. When creating this policy, we sought the input of the students of Skipton Primary School.

Each classroom was asked to contribute their thoughts on one area of this policy. Their results are shown below.

Prep -One Rights and Responsibilities



Grade Two Philosophy and Vision



Grade Three – Four Identifying students in need of support



Grade Three-Four Student Behavioural Expectations



Grade Five - Six Mentoring and Peer Support



