



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, WELLBEING & INCLUSION POLICY

**This policy reflects the DEECD *Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance* and was produced in consultation with the school community
October 2015, updated October 2019**

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1. School profile:

Nungurner is a rural school with a current enrolment of 34 students and a teaching staff of 2.8. It is situated on the beautiful Gippsland Lakes and neighbours the beach-side towns of Lakes Entrance and Metung, popular for sailing, fishing, surfing and high-quality restaurants and cafes.

Nungurner is a 3.5 hour drive from Melbourne and is part of a thriving arts community. It is also close to extensive forests, national parks and the snowfields. Framed by natural bush and farming land, the school has a large and spacious site which includes natural bush, vegetable gardens, a tennis court, a large oval and a play-ground.

Established in 1924, historically the school catered for the founding farming families but is now working in partnership with families from broad and varied backgrounds from the local area.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

At Nungurner Primary School we believe that all children have the ability to learn, and this happens best when the environment provided is safe and positive.

We aim to provide a child-centred, developmentally appropriate, learning environment that recognises, fosters and promotes the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each child and where mutual cooperation and respect is evident. We understand that many children have unique wellbeing and learning needs and we are committed to addressing these needs.

Our Student Wellbeing focus aims to empower individuals and teams to enable a sense of connectedness and purpose. We seek to help build self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience in order for our students to approach future life experiences, opportunities and challenges with self-assurance and energy.

Student safety and wellbeing are embedded in all components of the school's work and also addressed specifically as part of our Values Education and social skills programs.

Our school is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Please see our Bullying Prevention Policy for more information.

Our philosophy:

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

Our vision:

All students will have the knowledge, skills and dispositions for life-long learning and will be equipped to thoughtfully navigate and shape the world around them.

Our values:

Respect for ourselves, others and the environment, Perseverance, Responsibility, Cooperation.

A statement about the rights and responsibilities of all students and school staff is included at **Appendix 1**.

3. 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.

- The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behaviour management approach.
- 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 promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change.
- The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- The school will 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.

4. Engagement Strategies

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need. The School works collaboratively with students and parents/ carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

The universal (whole-school), targeted (group-specific) and individual engagement strategies used in our school are outlined in **Appendix 2**.

5. Identifying students in need of extra support

Our school will utilise the following information and tools identify students in need of extra support using the following strategies:

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- Behaviour observed by classroom teachers
- Engagement with student families
- School Entry Health Questionnaire

6. Behavioural expectations

Shared behaviour expectations for students, parents/carers and school staff are detailed at **Appendix 3**.

7. School actions

Restorative Practices

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

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.

Responding to challenging behaviour

Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, we will institute a staged response, as outlined in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance (see **Appendix 4**).

Discipline

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Restorative approach (eg repairing damage caused)
- Time for students to regulate behaviours, in a safe, familiar environment
- Detention
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Expulsion

Discipline will be applied in a way that is proportionate to the behaviour and upholds procedural fairness.

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the School under any circumstances.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be applied when the grounds for suspension and expulsion set out in the Engagement and Inclusion Guidance have been met.

Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the principal and our school will follow the processes for applying these disciplinary measures set out in the Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that our school will follow are available here:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/behaviour/suspension-expulsion/Pages/default.aspx>

8. Engaging with families

The School values parent / carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion survey, and from parent representatives on School Council.

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 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 homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- involving families in Student Support Groups
- providing families with information about , and opportunities to discuss, the learning program.
- regular, informal communication with families that builds relationships

Parents responsibilities for supporting their child's attendance and engagement are outlined at Appendix 3. Furthermore, parents are expected to act in a respectful and constructive manner when dealing with our school. More detail on parent responsibilities and consequences for inappropriate behaviour are outlined in our Statement of Values

9. Evaluation

Data collection and analysis

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

Some of sources of data used are:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- school level report data
- parent survey data
- data from case management work with students
- data extracted from software such as CASES21 or SOCS
- school specific student perception survey

Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

10. Appendices and Related Policies

Appendix 1: Statement of Rights and Responsibilities

Appendix 2: Student Engagement Strategies

Appendix 3: Behaviour expectations

Appendix 4: Staged response to behaviour issues

Appendix 5: Process for responding to breaches of Behaviour Expectations

This policy is informed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Student Engagement and inclusion Guidance available at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/behaviour/engagement/Pages/default.aspx>

Related policies: Convention on the Rights of the Child available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

Human Rights available at <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the right of all members of the School community to experience a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment. Staff, students and parents/ carers have a right to be treated with respect, and enjoy an environment free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation. (Refer to our Bullying Prevention Policy and Equal Opportunity Policy).

Teachers also have the rights to be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student.

Students have a responsibility to contribute positively to the educational experience for themselves and other students, to participate fully in the school's educational program, and to ensure that their behaviours demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

Parents/ carers have a responsibility to take an active interest in their child's educational progress, model and reinforce positive behaviours and ensure their child's regular attendance. They have a responsibility to support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, and engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.

Teachers have a responsibility to demonstrate the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching. That is, to 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, and use a range of strategies to engage students in effective learning. Teachers also have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Student Engagement Policy.

All members have an obligation to ensure school property is appropriately used and maintained.

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).

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

Universal strategies	Targeted strategies	Individual strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school will deliver a broad curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum using an Inquiry Approach. • Our teachers will adopt a range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students • Our school will develop behavioural expectations for all members of the school community in consultation with students, staff and parents/carers, and these will be taught to all students and shared with their families • Our school will regularly acknowledge examples of positive behaviour and student achievement, both informally in classroom settings and more formally in events such as assemblies and via communications to parents. • All students will have the opportunity to participate in a social and emotional learning curriculum program (specific programs currently being investigated) • Students will have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through discussions with staff and school council and in responses to student perception surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment • Teachers and support staff will undertake health promotion and social skill development in response to identified needs. • Relevant teaching staff will apply a trauma-informed approach (using Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatised Children, and similar resources) to working with students who have experience trauma, such as students from refugee backgrounds or who are in out of home-care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies to support attendance and engagement of individual students include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meet with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school ○ Establish a Student Support Group. ○ Seek extra resources under the Program for Students with Disabilities for eligible students ○ Develop a Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan. ○ Consider if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up. ○ Refer to external support services including ChildFirst, Local Government Youth Services, Community Agencies e.g GLCH, Good Beginnings, Communities for Children

Shared Behaviour Expectations

Appendix 3

	Students	Parents/Carers	Principals/Teachers & Staff
Engagement (participation in the classroom and other school activities)	<p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparedness to engage in and take full advantage of the school program • effort to do their very best • self-discipline to ensure a cooperative learning environment and model the school values • team work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive outcomes by valuing the importance of education and liaising with the school on their child's progress/needs • Support their child in their preparedness for the school day and in the provision of a supportive home environment • Monitor their child's school involvement and progress and communicate with the school when necessary • Are informed and supportive of school programs and actively participate in school events/parent groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will comply with its duty of care obligations and have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that can effectively engage all students • The school will provide appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to have input into their learning and experience success
Attendance	<p>All students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day that the school is open to students • be prepared to participate fully in lessons • bring a note from their parents/carers explaining an absence/lateness 	<p>Parents/Carers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that their child's enrolment details are correct • ensure their child attends regularly • advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent • account for all student absences • keep family holidays within scheduled school holidays 	<p>In accordance with legislation released March 1, 2014 the school will:</p> <p>In accordance with DEECD procedures the school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively promote regular attendance • mark rolls accurately each lesson • follow up on any unexplained absences promptly and consistently

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support their child's learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students after prolonged absences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify trends via data analysis Report attendance data in the school's Annual Report Support students whose attendance is problematic by developing 'Return to School' plans and working with families to implement individual strategies
Behaviour	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> model the schools core values of responsibility, perseverance, respect and cooperation. always treat others with respect. never physically or verbally abuse others. take responsibility for their behaviour and its impact on others obey all reasonable requests of staff. respect the rights of others to learn. No student has the right to impact on the learning of others. respect the property of others. comply with the school's policies and work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes 	<p>Parents/Carers are expected to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have high expectations of their child's behaviour and an understanding of the schools behavioural expectations Communicate with the school regarding their child's circumstances Cooperate with the school by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs 	<p>The school will deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the wellbeing of every child</p> <p>The school will employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues</p> <p>The school will consistently apply its Behavioural Policy through a shared collegiate understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances.</p> <p>The school recognises that, for some students, additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and is committed to working with families to reintegrate students after exclusion</p>

Staged response checklist for student behaviour issues

Stage 1: Promoting positive behaviour and preventing behavioural issues	
Suggested strategies	School actions
Define and teach school-wide expectations for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop understanding of school values with students each year. Use terms to which students can easily relate • Negotiate specific behaviours for classroom & playground with students at the beginning of each year; revisit regularly throughout year. • Negotiate consequences for breaches of behavioural expectations with students
Establish whole school positive behaviour programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school rewards for positive behaviour of whole group • Recognition of examples of students' exhibiting school values • Discussion & feedback with students re effects of positive behaviour on school learning environment and culture
Establish consistent school-wide processes to identify and support students at risk of disengagement from learning.	

Stage 2: Responding to individual students exhibiting challenging behaviour	
Suggested strategies	School actions
Assess the behaviour and its functions, influences, and triggers (include student, parents and school wellbeing staff as appropriate).	
Develop Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan (involve parent or carer)	
Consider if any environmental changes need to be made.	
Engage Student Support Services and/or community services to undertake assessments and/or provide specialist support	
Establish a student support group	
Implement appropriate disciplinary measures that are proportionate to problem behaviours	

Process for responding to breaches of Behaviour Expectations

Appendix 5

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BEHAVIOUR

The school maintains a fair discipline system that is based on natural justice, procedural fairness and restorative practices. Central to this system is the establishment of preventative strategies and systems in the classroom and playground.

Recognising Appropriate Behaviour

Students who display behaviour may be rewarded with:

- Verbal recognition
- An award/certificate
- A positive note home
- Class wide reinforcement
- Recognition in the newsletter
- Awards given at assembly
- Incidental and informal feedback to parents
- 'Reward Chart Points'

Recognising 'at risk' Students

Students may be identified as being at risk of harm or disengagement from education due to behaviours including:

- Bullying
- Social isolation
- Inappropriate behaviours
- Disclosing issues

Where a student is identified as 'at risk' they may be:

- Referred to the Principal,
- Participate in a Restorative Justice Session
- Referred to an external agency for support

Managing Unacceptable Behaviour in the Classroom

The word discipline originates from the word 'disciple' meaning 'to teach. At Nungurner Primary School we aim to respond to inappropriate behaviour by teaching children that inappropriate behaviours have consequences and that there are alternative, positive ways to behave. Teachers aim to manage inappropriate behaviour in their classroom. Each classroom will have clearly defined class rules/values/expectations that are negotiated between teachers and students. If a student behaves inappropriately, staff may:

1. Talk to the student - help the student identify their inappropriate behaviour and the impact it is having on class mates and staff. This is most effective when the language and practices of restorative justice are employed. Talking and the supporting the student to modify their behaviour may be an ongoing process.
2. If the behaviour persists, give the student a verbal warning.
3. If the behaviour continues, students may be referred for intervention, for example, a talk with the Principal or other appropriate staff member. The teacher involved may inform the parents if the behavioural issues are out of character or persistent. The student may be placed in a "Time Away" area within the classroom.
4. At this point, if the behaviour continues, it may be considered unsafe, severely disruptive and/or severe in nature and the procedure outlined below may be required. Staff may also at this point consider the student to be 'at risk' and refer the student for support.

When the behaviour is unsafe, severely disruptive and/or severe in nature, staff may contact the Principal or another staff member to assist with the behaviour. The Principal may then decide to:

- Supervise the class while another staff member talks to the student/s
- Meet with the student
- Offer the student the opportunity to participate in a Restorative Justice Session

Managing Inappropriate Behaviour in the Yard

If a student behaves inappropriately in the yard, staff may:

1. Help the student identify their inappropriate behaviour and the impact it is having on other students and staff. This is most effective when the language and practices of restorative justice are employed.
2. If the behaviour persists, give the student a verbal warning.
3. If the behaviour continues, place student in a 'time away' area (usually a bench or the quiet area or inside if there are staff available to supervise).
4. Upon returning the teacher will engage the student in a restorative conversation.
5. If the behaviour continues, the student may be asked to stay on the 'time away' bench for a longer period of time.
6. At this point, staff may also consider the student to be 'at risk' and refer the student for support.

When the behaviour is unsafe, severely disruptive and/or severe in nature, staff may contact the Principal or other staff member to assist with the behaviour.

The Principal may then decide to:

- Support staff while they talk to the student/s
- Talk to the student
- Offer the student the opportunity to participate in a Restorative Justice Session