Jells Park Primary School
Student Engagement Policy

Purpose:
Students can reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe in a positive, secure and stimulating school learning environment with a culture of inclusiveness that engages and supports their learning.

Guidelines:
• This Policy will reflect the school community’s expectations of student engagement, attendance and positive behaviours.

School Profile Statement
Jells Park Primary School is situated in the south eastern residential area of Wheelers Hill, in a natural treed environment adjacent to Jells Park Reserve and a large private school. Our school has excellent and extensive facilities, which have been thoroughly upgraded and/or built in the past few years.
Student enrolment is approximately 490 and the roll has expanded for each of the past five years and indications are that this trend will continue. A proportion of enrolments come from adjacent suburbs.
The student population is predominantly Australian born with mostly European backgrounds. Less than 10% of families receive EMA and many families are professionals or business proprietors. Most families own their homes and some have bought in the area to ensure ease of access to the private school for their child’s secondary education. There is a high level of parent involvement and support in all areas of the school. Parents express high expectations of the school and expect high standards of achievement for their children.
The school provides extensive teaching and learning programs which engage, challenge and encourage learning rigour. These programs include both in school and after school opportunities to cater for a wide range of student interests, including performing arts, sports, state challenges like RACV, as well as systematic leadership programs and opportunities. There is a strong and consistent participation rate in all extra curricula activities.
The contracted ‘Before and After School Care’ programs are well patronised, as are the Holiday programs during each term recess.
There is a strong student voice via Junior School Council and other forums such as class meetings and regular surveys of student opinion, concerns and/or reflections.
The school has a focus on health and wellbeing and a variety of programs support the weekly Values Program. The students are well behaved, cooperative, and courteous and display pride in the school and its environs.

Whole-school Prevention Statement
Jells Park Primary School’s philosophy is based in our statement of Purpose and Values identified in the school’s Strategic Plan, which is: ‘To nurture and develop individuals to become adaptable in a changing environment and to acquire a life long love of learning and the skills and attitudes necessary to function successfully in a global society.’

The Values are identified as:
Respect
• Treating others with empathy, compassion and dignity
• Valuing yourself and the environment
Honesty
• Behaving in a trustworthy manner
• Demonstrating integrity and fairness
Excellence
• Taking pride in the efforts and achievements of ourselves and others
• Accepting the challenge to realise our full potential
Resilience
• Maintaining a positive attitude
• Demonstrating persistence and flexibility

Student Engagement Policy
Feb 10
page 1
The philosophy and values will continue to be practiced by the community of teachers, students and parents as part of daily school life. They will continue to be taught as part of the weekly Values and You Can Do It programs in classrooms. Members actively practicing such aspects are praised, commended, rewarded and held as role models for others and valued as positive behaviours reflecting the school culture.

The School Strategic Plan (2007-2010) Goal for Student Engagement and Wellbeing is: ‘To provide a safe and stimulating learning environment that excites students to challenge and extend their thinking, social competencies, resilience and self-esteem’.

The school’s Annual Implementation Plans set out clear and precise yearly implementation targets and achievement milestones to be undertaken during the year, and progress is reported via the Annual Report to the School Community.

Some programs and strategies implemented in the school to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours include:

- Differentiated, exciting and rigorous learning classroom programs
- Specialist programs including Art, Physical Education, Music and LOTE – Mandarin
- Leadership and responsibility roles beginning from Prep
- Junior School Council from Year 3
- Cultural and sporting after-school programs
- Lunchtime and clubs programs
- Private Music lessons during school for a variety of instruments
- Two Computer Lab facilities to engage in real life learning
- Computers and interactive whiteboards in every class
- Large artificially grassed oval for all seasons activity
- Outdoor Education programs at each Year level
- Awards certificates at weekly Assemblies and classroom rewards systems
- Systematic follow-up of school absences with parents and promotion of ‘It’s Not OK to be Away’ program
- Values, ‘Tribes’ and ‘You Can Do It’ programs to promote resilient behaviours
- Resilience, Anti Bullying and related Girl Power programs, as the needs arise
- Regular Occupation Health and Safety audits
- Excellent internal and external environment, which is very well maintained
- Parent participation in many aspects of school life
- Committees and other forums to consult with, and inform parents about educational issues

Rights and Responsibilities

All members of our school community have the right to participate in, and feel safe and welcomed in, our attractive and friendly school environment. Our students, their parents/carers and our staff will treat each other with dignity and respect at all times. Behaviours such as Bullying and Cyber bullying will not be tolerated in the school and clear responses to such aspects are set out in the Anti bullying Policy and the Internet Policy. The school values diversity and individuality, which is reflected in the inclusive and supportive provision of programs for students with special emotional, social and physical needs.

Rights and responsibilities strongly reflect our school community’s values about how we function and relate.

The following rights and responsibilities will continue to be implemented:

Student rights

A ‘right’ is something to which you are entitled. Your classmates and adults have rights too.

1. You have a right to a friendly, happy school environment that provides you with lots of opportunities to learn.
2. You have a right to feel safe and secure at all times at school.
3. You have a right to be an individual and be treated with respect.
4. You have a right to be treated equally and fairly at school.
5. You have a right to know the rules and expectations.

Student Responsibilities
1. You have a responsibility to work or play without spoiling the activities of others.
2. You have a responsibility to be courteous to others.
3. You have a responsibility to be honest and thoughtful of others.
4. You have a responsibility to take care of your own belongings, as well as the property of other people including school property.
5. You have a responsibility to wear your school uniform, unless there is a special reason for not doing so.
6. You have a responsibility to complete your schoolwork to the very best of your ability.
7. You have a responsibility to follow school rules and accept the consequences of any poor behaviour.
8. You have a responsibility to tell an adult if you notice unfair or bad behaviour by others.

School Rules
School rules support our school values and the rights and responsibilities of students and help to provide a safe environment for all.

Respect
We talk politely to one another and to adults.
We take care of our own belongings as well as things belonging to other people.
We use all school property responsibly.
We take good care of our environment outside and put our rubbish in the bins.

Safety
We stay outside the classrooms at recess and lunch times, unless we are with a teacher.
The courtyard is for quiet activities and we don’t play ball games in the courtyard or run through the area.
At playtimes we all stay in the playground.
We ask a teacher to get any ball that goes outside the school.
The play equipment is the only place for climbing.
We don’t hurt people at our school.
We don’t throw things that can hurt.
We don’t bring dangerous or expensive toys to school.
We wear our broad brimmed hats outside in Terms 1 & 4.
If we don’t have a hat we stay on the seats in the courtyard area.
We only eat in the classrooms or in the courtyard.

Honesty
If there is a problem, we talk sensibly to the people involved and try to work it out fairly.
When we find something that does not belong to us, we return it to the owner, where possible, or take it to the School Office.

Shared Expectations
Shared expectations are those encompassed by the Principal, teachers, support staff, students and parents/carers in the school. Shared expectations are part of our school’s culture and are linked to participation, relationship building, the physical environment, curriculum provision and the provision of support and partnerships, as well as behaviour and attendance.

Expectations of the Principal, Teachers and Support Staff include:
- The provision of proactive leadership of the entire school community.
- The promotion of a positive and stimulating school culture where the expectations of the school are clearly espoused and practiced.
- The provision of skilled staff and appropriate resources to enable the school to function at an optimum level for the benefit of all in the school community.
- The provision of curriculum and other opportunities to cater for a diversity of needs, including students with disabilities or special needs of any sort.
• Targeted and ongoing professional development and mentoring of staff to maintain optimum professional practice.
• The provision of relevant and challenging learning opportunities for all students, which promote positive engagement and a sense of belonging.
• Responding in a courteous, fair and professional manner to foster positive self esteem and to build positive relationships with all members of the school community.
• The practice of professional, caring and non judgemental attitudes towards any student
• The practice of trust and confidentiality towards any parties involved in a student’s program and progress.
• Ensuring that consistent strategies for proactive prevention and early intervention are practised to support engagement and positive behaviour and to strengthen resilience.
• The encouragement of parents/carers to support the school in a variety of ways and to enable this to be done in a safe and proactive way

Expectations of students include:
• Practising appropriate responsibilities and attending to school and class rules, as set out in the ‘Student Rights and Responsibilities’ Booklet.
• Being proactive and accepting challenges in their learning and to promote the development of their social and emotional growth.
• Developing and extending their resilient behaviours in daily school life.
• Attending school regularly and participating in and out of the classroom in a positive manner

Expectations of parents and carers:
• Taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress
• Being proactive about promoting positive outcomes for their child at our school.
• Communicating regularly and constructively with the school regarding their child’s learning and well being
• Ensuring that their child attends school daily during term unless illness or extenuating circumstances prevent the child being present.
• Celebrating successes and identifying strategies to overcome disappointments

School Actions and Consequences

School Discipline
Jells Park Primary School believes that a positive approach to student wellbeing ensures that the rights and safety of all students are protected. Teachers are trained in behaviour management strategies and ensure that positive reinforcement is the major approach utilised. This leads to increased levels of resilience in students and a minimal need for discipline measures to be carried out. Occasionally the actions of students may lead to the need to implement more structured (formal) measures.

Guidelines for School Discipline:
• To provide a safe and supportive environment for all students, a set of class rules is to be developed by each classroom teacher and students at the beginning of the year. This set of rules is to have a similar theme across the entire school and to reflect the positive values of Jells Park Primary School.
• For bullying behaviours, discipline measures are discussed in detail in the Anti-Bullying Document (Policy).
• Discipline measures are to be carried out consistently by all staff.
• At all times, wherever possible, the discipline measures administered should relate to the unacceptable behaviour.
• All aspects of the Discipline Policy are to be carried out in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Student Discipline Procedures, 1994 and Ministerial Order No. 1, Discipline of Pupils. From 1st July 2009 The Effective Schools are Engaging Schools; Student Engagement Policy Guidelines 2009 and Ministerial Order No. 184 will replace the previous orders and guidelines.
• Jells Park Primary School’s Rights, Responsibilities and Rules Booklet (refer to attachments) outlines the expectations of all students.
• Respectful and courteous behaviour is expected from all groups of students in class or when representing the school at events or participating in excursions and camps.

• Where breaches of rules involve students with special needs, discretion will be used in consultation with staff and Assistant Principal.

Implementation:

• In general, the agreed strategy is that the first reported incident will result in the offending student receiving a verbal warning, if the student continues to breach rules they will then receive further consequences in line with classroom rules.

• Each classroom teacher is to develop a set of classroom rules in consultation with their students.

• All incidents that occur in classrooms are to be recorded on the Classroom Incident Report Sheet and will be collected by a designated staff member at the conclusion of each term. The designated staff member will collate the results and distribute the data to relevant staff. If a staff member decides that the appropriate consequence is that the student is excluded from their classroom, the student will be sent to Laraine Clacher, for Prep - 2 students, and Anne Davies, for Year 3 - 6 students, with an Exclusion Notice.

• Yard duty teachers are to record any incidents that occur in the playground on the Playground Incident Record, and wherever possible, provide a brief note to the respective classroom teacher/s using the incident slip that is found in the Yard Duty folders. A designated staff member will collate the Playground Incident Record regularly and provide the staff with the results.

• If the staff member on Yard Duty deems the behaviour to be worthy of some ‘Time Out’, the student will walk with the yard duty teacher for part of morning or lunch recess.

• Incident Report Forms (refer to attachments) are to be completed by the reporting staff member and are to be distributed to the classroom teacher as soon as possible after an incident.

• A Behaviour Reflection sheet will be completed by the student, where possible, and a copy sent to the classroom teacher and the Assistant Principal.

• Any group of students whose behaviour is unacceptable will be spoken to by co-ordinators and/or Assistant Principal and Principal. The removal of privileges may result.

• Serious and/or continued breaches of the Student Discipline Policy and School Rules will result in more formal disciplinary measures in line with D.E.E.C.D.

From 1st July 2009 The Effective Schools are Engaging Schools; Student Engagement Policy Guidelines 2009 and Ministerial Order No. 184 will replace the previous orders and guidelines.

Examples of these types of behaviours may include:

• Swearing at, or deliberately hurting a staff member.

• Throwing chairs and/or other missiles that endanger the safety of others.

• Deliberately causing physical harm to another student.

• Deliberately damaging property.

• Continued refusal to follow instructions so that the safety of the child or others is compromised.

If these types of incidents do occur, it is expected that the Principal or Assistant Principal are notified immediately and they will deal directly with the student and parents to determine the consequences. These consequences will comply with the Effective Schools are Engaging Schools; Student Engagement Policy Guidelines 2009 and Ministerial Order No. 184 which replace the previous orders and guidelines.

• Attached is an outline of some examples of breaches of rules and the agreed consequences, which will also be placed in the Yard Duty Folders.

Out of Classroom Examples

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Unacceptable Behaviours</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eating Outside of the Courtyard</td>
<td>1. Finish eating and remain in courtyard until notified by teacher and record on Incident Record.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Regular offenders will complete 15 minutes of Yard Duty after they have finished eating their</td>
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Dangerous Activities
Including climbing trees, throwing sticks or stones indiscriminately, going out of bounds etc.

1. Warning and record on Incident Record.
2. Student directed to sit in the courtyard for 15 minutes.
3. Repeated offences refer to AP and parents to be notified.

Inappropriate Language

1. Verbal apology and record on Incident Record.
   * If inappropriate language involved specific 4 letter words, immediate referral to AP and parents to be notified.

Physically Aggressive Behaviour
Including pushing, kicking, hitting etc.

1. Apology, record on incident record and student directed to walk with the yard duty teacher.
2. Serious incidents result in immediate referral to AP and parents to be notified.

Classroom Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Unacceptable Behaviours</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Inappropriate Language          | 1. Verbal apology and record on Incident Record.  
                                 | 2. Notify parents of incident.  
                                 | * If inappropriate language involved specific 4 letter words, immediate referral to AP and parents to be notified. |
| Disruptive Behaviour            | 1. Warning.  
                                 | 2. Removal to somewhere else within the classroom.  
                                 | 3. Exited to Laraine Clacher, Kevin Oakey or Anne Davies and discussion of rule breach with classroom teacher during recess or lunch interval.  
                                 | 4. Parents notified.  
                                 | 5. Exited to AP.  
                                 | * For students who repeatedly breach this rule, a Behaviour Management Plan will be implemented in consultation with the classroom teacher, AP and parents. |
| Physically Aggressive Behaviour | 1. Apology, exclusion from an activity and record in Incident Record.  
                                 | 2. In serious incidents immediate referral to AP and parents being notified. |

When ongoing support of a student is required, a staged response will be implemented by the school to support improved behaviour.

The Student Support Group will be part of the prevention and early intervention strategies for students with learning and/or behavioural issues. The support group will comprise the Principal or designated deputy, parent/carer, classroom teacher and any professional support staff involved with the child. The support group will plan the best course of action to support the student and may also recommend that he/she be referred to others to assist with the provision of optimum outcomes.

Should a student be considered for suspension, or suspension be necessary, the Student Support Group will meet to clearly describe the issues and endeavour to set out a range of strategies to overcome the particular issue/s.

Students may be suspended for breaching any of the reasons for suspension as set out in DEECD’s ‘Student Engagement Policy Guidelines’ pamphlet – Procedures for Suspension.

The maximum suspension is five days in a row and no more than fifteen days a year, unless a longer period is granted by DEECD.

*Student Engagement Policy*

Feb 10

page 6
The process and procedures for suspension, and reinstatement back to the school, as set out in the pamphlet, will be precisely followed should the school need to consider suspending a student. – refer to the pamphlet.

When suspension has not effected a positive improvement and/or change in behaviours, even though the Student Support Group has pursued all practical avenues, a student may be expelled. Students may be expelled for breaching any of the reasons for expulsion as set out in DEECD’s ‘Student Engagement Policy Guidelines’ pamphlet – Procedures for Expulsion.

The process and procedures for expulsion, as set out in the pamphlet, will be precisely followed should the school need to consider expelling a student. – refer to the pamphlet.

A parent/carer may appeal an expulsion, but must do so within ten school days from the start of the expulsion

Student Attendance

The school provides a safe and stimulating learning environment to excite students to challenge and extend their thinking, social competencies, resilience and self–esteem. For students to be engaged in learning, they need to attend school.

It is an expectation of the school that students attend every day during the term, except when they are ill or there are extenuating circumstances.

The response by the school to absences is a staged one:

• All student absences will be explained in writing.
• Parents/carers are given Absence Forms at the beginning of each year and when a child returns to school from being absent, a completed form is to be given to the classroom teacher and then sent to the school office for reference.
• Reasons for absences may be recorded in a child’s Communication Book or School Diary, photocopied and sent to the Office.
• When no explanation has been given, the classroom teacher will follow up with a note or phone call to remind the parent/carer that a written explanation is necessary.
• The School Office monitors all student absence written explanations and will request that teachers collect them when notes are not forthcoming.
• The school will contact the family if an absence has not been explained within three days. After ten days, a written explanation must be made or the student’s file will reflect a ‘failure to explain’ statement.
• All absences in the school are monitored by a Leading Teacher, who keeps a record of the number of absences of particular children who are regularly absent and follows up with a phone call and/or meeting with the parent/carer. The meeting will include a discussion about the regularity of the absences, the effect on the child’s learning and other developmental aspects, and suggestions to assist in getting the child to school every day and on time.
• In consultation with the Assistant Principal, a Support Group may be set up to further support the family, if required. The Support Group may recommend that other professionals also be involved in the support of the child and family.
• On going attendance issues will require a formal Student Attendance Improvement Plan and an Individual Learning Plan with timetabled regular reviews with the Support Group.

School Attendance at Jells Park Primary School is good, but is affected by the practice of many families taking family holidays during term time. Students may be absent for one to two week periods, as well as several ‘illness’ days during the rest of the year. Families are encouraged to have their children at school during term time via various communication forums and the school uses suggestions from the ‘It’s Not OK to Be Away’ DEECD program to promote consistent attendance.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with:

Guidelines Engagement Policy Guidelines
School Strategic Plan
Annual Implementation Plan
Annual Report to the School Community
Student Rights, Responsibilities and Rules Booklet
Anti Bullying Policy
Internet Policy

Parent, Teacher and Student Survey data summaries

References:
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act
Disability Standards for Education 2005
Disability Discrimination Act
Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide
Schools Accountability and Improvement Framework website

Evaluation
Successful implementation of this policy will be measured by:
  • Data collected from the annual Student Attitude to School Survey.
  • Feedback from the annual Parent Opinion Survey.
  • Data from the annual Staff Opinion Survey.

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the Schools’ four yearly review cycle or sooner, as required.