



## **OBERON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

# **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION POLICY 2019**

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## 1.0. Rationale

At Oberon Primary School (OPS), the welfare of our students is paramount. Student engagement and inclusion are a priority, and drive our teaching and learning programs. At Oberon Primary School we want to create an environment that promotes positive health, emotional competency and where students can thrive and flourish. The school aims to create a student-centred school, through inclusion and positive relationships.

## 2.0. Policy Statement

The Department of Education and Training (DET) requires that every government school to have a Student Engagement Policy. This policy is designed to provide the basis on which a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment can be developed and maintained. The Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy also articulates the expectations and aspirations of the school community in relation to student engagement, including strategies to address bullying, school attendance and behaviour.

## 3.0. Implementation

School, home and the community have a shared accountability for student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours. To promote and foster student engagement across the school, Oberon Primary will implement proactive strategies for:

- building a culture of fostering positive relationships
- establishing predictable, fair environments
- providing personalised learning programs
- acknowledging all students contributions to school-life
- providing opportunities for decision making and responsibility
- providing a pleasant physical environment
- teaching and promoting student managed learning

## 4.0. School Profile

Oberon Primary School is located in the increasingly popular and progressive southern Geelong suburb of Belmont. The school was established in 1957 and has a strong sense of history and connection to the local community. Currently, we have 185 students and expect these numbers to grow over the next two to three years. Our supportive, creative and flexible culture enables staff, students and parents to work diligently together in order to research, plan and deliver educational experiences that best meet our students' diverse needs, talents and strengths, throughout each level from Prep/Foundation to Grade 6. We are committed to continuous refinement and development of our teaching practices.

Oberon Primary strives to provide a safe and supportive community of life-long learning where respect, diversity and pride are valued by all. The links the school has with the community provide extra-curricular activities and leadership opportunities for students. We encourage outstanding performances in the areas of leadership, academic achievement, sport, performing arts, cultural and artistic achievement. Our students are actively engaged in all levels of the decision making within the school community and the school places high value on the expertise of our teachers and the role of parents as partners in learning.

Oberon Primary School has developed a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum using the "Victorian Curriculum" and has embedded assessment and reporting procedures.

The school has focused on monitoring student attendance and as a consequence over the years have introduced a variety of positive strategies to encourage regular attendance. We have

introduced eCASES to report absences.

Our experienced staff is highly committed to the wellbeing and education of the students. The teacher profile at OPS represents a balance of experienced and graduate teachers. The school is student and curriculum focused. It strives for and encourages maximum achievement in all areas of teaching, learning and student wellbeing. Specialist programs include Art, Phys. Ed., ICT. We offer an out-of-school hours care program (operated by the external provider – EXTEND) and the numbers of students using this service is steady.

#### **4.1. Oberon Primary School Vision Statement**

To be a vibrant learning community with high expectations, that provides a respectful, cooperative and caring environment which maximises learning, personal well-being and growth for all students in our ever-changing world.

#### **4.2. Philosophy**

Our philosophy is based around the development of the whole individual child. Our students benefit from programs that are personalised, enabling them to experience success and to reach their full potential. In addition, Oberon Primary promotes the philosophy of equal opportunity, non-discrimination and the recognition of the diversity of cultures. Each student is made aware that bullying and intolerance are not accepted at school, and that good manners, hard work and kind deeds are encouraged.

Oberon Primary prides itself on being a supportive and caring school. Students who are living under difficult circumstances are supported by the school. Parents of these students are also offered support both emotionally and financially by being directed to the most suitable agency that can accommodate their needs.

At Oberon Primary School we aim to:

- foster a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment through engagement
- provide students with a safe learning environment where students feel physically and emotionally secure
- provide support for individual circumstances when a student begins to disengage from their learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated
- maximise student learning opportunities and performance through engagement
- provide genuine opportunities for student/parent participation and student/parent voice
- build a school environment based on positive behaviours and values

#### **4.3. School Values**

At Oberon, we aim to foster skills and attributes (i.e. values) in our students that extend beyond the classroom. We have embraced the gr8 people program to support our students to become well-rounded individuals who are able to successfully function in our ever-changing world.

The gr8 people program comprises ten key attributes. While the idea is that the attributes are 'caught NOT taught' we do set aside regular time to focus on the development of these attributes through learning experiences and targeted activities.

The ten attributes are: Balanced, Caring, Creative, Fair and Trustworthy, Good communicators, Hardworking, Knowledgeable, Positive, Problem Solvers, and Team Players.

Students who exhibit these attributes are celebrated and rewarded at our regular whole school assemblies. We really do think our students are gr8!

## **5.0. School statement of values (incorporating DET expectations)**

*Promoting healthy, safe and respectful communities*

At Oberon Primary School we recognise the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

This Statement of Values sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Our Statement of Values acknowledges that parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

### **5.1. Responsibilities**

*As principals and school leaders, we will:*

- Work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe conduct is expected of everyone.
- Behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide inclusive, safe and orderly environments.
- Plan, implement, and monitor arrangements to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students in attendance at the school is protected.
- Identify and support students who are or may be at risk.
- Do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential.
- Work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Respond appropriately when inclusive, safe or orderly behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required.
- Make known to parents the school's communication and complaints procedures.
- Ask any person who is acting in an offensive or disorderly way to leave the school grounds.

*As teachers and all non-teaching staff, we will:*

- Model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession.
- Pro-actively engage with parents about student outcomes.
- Work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs.
- Communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect.

#### As parents, we will:

- Model positive behaviour to our child.
- Ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- Take an interest in our child's school and learning.
- Work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child.
- Communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns.
- Support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.
- Follow the school's complaints processes if there are complaints.
- Treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

#### As students, we will:

- Model positive behaviour to other students.
- Comply with and model the gr8 school values.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Respect ourselves, other members of the school community, school property and the school environment.
- Actively participate in school.
- Not disrupt the **learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.**

#### As community members, we will:

- Model positive behaviour to the school community.
- Treat other members of the school community with respect.
- Support school staff to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

## 5.2. Consequences for Failing to Uphold the Statement of Values

### Unreasonable Behaviours

Behaviours that are considered inappropriate on and adjacent to school grounds or in relation to school business and that do not uphold the principles of this Statement of Values include when a person:

- is rude, aggressive or harasses others
- sends rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- is manipulative or threatening
- speaks in an aggressive tone, either in person or over the telephone
- makes sexist, racist or derogatory comments
- inappropriately uses social media as a forum to raise concerns/make complaints against the school
- is physically intimidating, e.g. standing very close.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this Statement of Values may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences. This may include:

- utilising mediation and counselling services
- alternative communication strategies being applied
- formal notice preventing entry onto school premises or attendance at school activities. Written notice will follow any verbal notice given.
- an intervention order being sought
- informing the police which may result in a charge of trespass or assault.

By agreeing to meet specified standards of positive behaviour, everyone in our school community can be assured that they will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, this will help to create a school that is safe and orderly, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

## 6.0 Engagement Strategies

Oberon Primary School uses a range of evidence-based strategies to positively engage students in learning, and intervene early when problems arise. Some of the engagement strategies employed are outlined below.

### 6.1. Universal

At Oberon Primary School universal (school-wide) engagement strategies are used to create a safe, inclusive and empowering environment that fosters an enthusiasm for learning and supports student wellbeing. These include:

- eSMART
- Kids Matter
- Start Up, Class Agreements and Norms
- Weekly alternative lunchtime activities including: drawing club, LEGO club, juggling club and gardening club.
- Parent Helper Programs

- Out of Hours School Care (run by Extend: an external service provider)
- Cultural Days – e.g. Sorry Day, International Food Day
- Sporting events
- Whole school concert

### 6.1. Targeted

At Oberon Primary School targeted (population-specific) engagement strategies are used that meet the varied needs of vulnerable cohorts, including both prevention and intervention strategies. Examples include:

- Digital Licence
- Cyber Safety Parent, Teacher & Student Forums
- Reading Recovery
- GATEWAYS
- Whole School Buddies
- Literacy and Numeracy Intervention
- Student Leadership
- Extension programs

### 6.3. Individual

At Oberon Primary School individual (student-specific) engagement strategies for students at risk, including strategies to identify and respond to individual student circumstances. . These may include:

- Funded support for students with disabilities
- Regular student support group meetings
- Individual learning /behaviour plans
- Allied health professionals regularly involved with students
- Use of eCASES data to track student attendance, health records and school reports
- Goal setting and student-led, 3-way (student-parent-teacher) interviews.

**7.0. Bullying Prevention:** Refer to the Oberon Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy.

## 8.0. Behaviour Management Strategies

At Oberon Primary School there are a number of programs to proactively teach our school values, as outlined in the Engagement Strategies. However, from time to time children make mistakes and may behave in a way that is unsafe or unfriendly. It is important to have a consistent approach to help children become responsible for their behaviour. The information below outlines our formal staged response. It is a guide only, as every case is treated independently.

### 8.1. STAGE ONE AND TWO: Initial Action—Teacher

When a minor misbehaviour occurs a child receives a warning. A warning could be verbal or the child's name recorded on the board. A mark will be recorded against the name if the behaviour continues. The child may also be moved within the classroom or class. These behaviours may include: distracting, talking out of turn, annoying behaviour in the playground, rough play.

## 8.2 STAGE THREE: Teacher

Further direct action by teachers will be required for repeating misbehaviour, escalating behaviour and not following the teacher's instructions of a more deliberate nature. These behaviours may include: continually interrupting the learning of others, damaging another person's property, throwing objects, intentionally hurting another person's feelings, rough play or unsafe play.

### *Consequence:*

- A discussion of the school values at recess or lunchtime with appropriate teacher.
- A school proforma and student response sheet may be completed and sent home outlining the behaviour and the restorative action.
- The student's parent may be contacted by telephone or via the proforma.
- A written or verbal apology may be expected from the student.

## 8.3. STAGE FOUR: Principal or Assistant Principal

Some behaviours are referred to the Principal and Assistant Principal directly. These behaviours may include: refusing to follow a direct instruction from the teacher, engaging in behaviour that severely disrupts the classroom or specialist program, intentionally physically harming another person, deliberate rudeness towards a teacher or adult, severe teasing or bullying.

### *Consequence:*

- A discussion of the school values at recess or lunchtime with appropriate teacher.
- Parents will be notified where appropriate.
- A written or verbal apology will be expected from the student.
- A possible "in school" exclusion (e.g. "room-exit" (when child is sent to see the principal) or "time-out") from regular program for a set period of time will be determined for each individual case.
- For ongoing behaviour issues the school has a discipline procedure consisting of:
  1. 3 room exits per week = 1 lunchtime time-out
  2. 3 lunchtime time-outs = 1 after-school detention
- For breaches of the 'Cybersmart' guidelines; access to internet usage will be reviewed.

## 8.4. STAGE FIVE: Principal or Assistant Principal

Continued breaches or serious misbehaviour. Refusing to follow a direct instruction from the Principal or Assistant Principal.

- One day or longer "in school" exclusion from regular program
- A written or verbal apology from the student.

## 8.5. STAGE STAGE SIX: Principal

Very serious forms of misbehaviour following DET suspension guidelines.

## **8.6. STAGE STAGE SEVEN: Principal and DET**

Where there are extreme cases of misbehaviour and suspension is deemed to be inadequate, the school will follow the expulsion guidelines as set down by the DET.

## **9.0. Appropriate Behaviour**

Oberon Primary School acknowledges students who meet the shared expectations, as outlined in the Statement of Values, in this policy through recognition and encouragement as follows:

- special recognition at assemblies
- reports
- references
- newsletters
- leadership opportunities
- scholarships
- positive feedback
- the right to represent the school
- awards nights

## **10.0. Additional Student Support**

There are times when students need additional support. When this is required a number of strategies are used to establish why a student is thinking, feeling or acting the way they are. Examples of strategies used to determine what supports are needed are listed below:

- establish and understand the life circumstances of the child and how they feel
- collect data on which to base the strategies
- develop Individual Learning or Behaviour Plans
- teach alternative/appropriate behaviour
- monitor and measure student progress
- use inclusive and consistent classroom strategies
- establish out of class support strategies
- convene Student Support Groups as required
- counselling
- appropriate behaviours taught and agreed to
- payment for damage sought
- withdraw privileges
- withdraw student temporarily from class
- hold Student Support Group meetings
- give the student detention
- negotiate alternative pathways or settings for students; or as a matter of last resort, suspension or expulsion.

**Related Information**

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/behaviour/engagement/Pages/default.aspx>

**Related Policies**

OPS Anti-Bullying Policy

OPS Child Safe Policy

OPS Equal Opportunity & Harassment Policy

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was ratified by the School Council on: 18/06/2019

Next review date: June 2022