

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

This policy was last ratified by School Council on

RATIONALE

We understand that students can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe and when there is a positive school culture that is fair and respectful.

Our policy aims to help us develop and maintain a school environment where:

- There is a healthy school culture in which, through engagement, high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment
- Students are provided with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure
- Support is provided for individuals in circumstances when a student begins to disengage from his/her learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated
- Students are engaged and learning opportunities are maximised
- Genuine opportunities are provided for student/parent participation and student/parent voice
- Positive behaviours and values are encouraged and fostered

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SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

Buninyong Primary is a multi-campus school with sites at Buninyong and Scotsburn. In 2013 we have 526 students enrolled at the Buninyong Campus and 50 at the Scotsburn Campus. The school has the equivalent of 42 full time staff, including 2 Principal Class, 32 Teachers and 10 Education Support Staff.

We understand that the best outcomes are achieved when there is a strong relationship between home and school. As such, the school seeks to maintain a strong sense of community through an 'open door' policy, good communication, whole school community events and a Parent Liaison Representative program that builds the connection between parents, teachers and classrooms. As a result, the school enjoys a high level of parental support and involvement, which promotes student engagement and positive behaviours.

Buninyong Primary School prides itself on providing a welcoming, inclusive and safe learning environment where all children feel they belong. We seek to meet the needs of all students, including their learning, social and emotional needs. We aim to engage every student by providing a comprehensive program in all key learning areas and opportunities to pursue areas of interest. This includes participation in our specialist programs (Art, Music, Physical Education and Japanese) and a range of extra-curricula activities (eg, Chess Club, Junior and Senior Choirs, Debating Teams, various sporting competitions, Active After School program, Creative Kids program, etc). The school is well known for the opportunities provided to students in the Performing Arts. A quality camping program in grades 3-6 is also a highlight for our students.

The use of Learning Technologies to engage students is another feature of our school. All classrooms have electronic whiteboards and our ratio of computers to students is 1:4. From 2013 a 1:1 netbook program will operate with grade 5 and 6 students and each P-4 classroom will have a set of iPads and regular access to our computer lab.

We always aim to provide our students with classrooms and grounds that are interesting, stimulating and presented with pride. In recent times we have made a number of improvements to the school's playground, including the creation of a new synthetic turf playing field and a Japanese Garden.

Establishing whole school approaches to the way we work is priority at our school and this includes the way we care for and nurture our students. Our school employs a range of strategies to promote positive behaviours and prevent inappropriate behaviours. We also seek to deal with inappropriate behaviours in a fair, consistent and transparent fashion.

WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT

At Buninyong Primary School we understand that prevention is better than cure and make a considerable effort to promote positive behaviours and prevent inappropriate behaviours. We are proud of the classroom and yard environment, as both are conducive to quality teaching, personalised learning and to the general wellbeing of our students. Our values of Compassion, Honesty, Commitment, Optimism and Respect permeate all aspects of school life and our students certainly present as confident and happy individuals who get along well. This has been achieved because our staff works effectively as a team, employing a whole school approach to student wellbeing and adopting a collective sense of responsibility for all students.

All prevention, intervention, engagement and wellbeing programs are developed in response to student needs that have been determined by quantitative and qualitative analyses of school data. Data is used to continually evaluate and refine current programs.

Stimulating and Supportive Learning Environment

Opportunities that contribute to the school and effectively engage students and promote positive behaviours include:

Celebrations- are used to recognise achievement and to encourage everyone to strive to be the best they can be:

- The focus at Friday assemblies is to celebrate what's happening around the school, including the achievement of individuals and groups (presentations showcasing our learning feature at every assembly)
- An Amazing Buninyong Child (ABC) is selected for each class every week
- An Act of Kindness is awarded to one child from across the school each week
- Grade 4 students participate in the Story of Buninyong project which explores local history and builds an appreciation of our cultural diversity. This culminates in a performance that is a celebration enjoyed by many from the school and broader community
- Developing student leadership, particularly from grade 6 with a variety of leadership roles, but also across all year levels through the V.O.T.S. (Voice of the Students) initiative

Curriculum / Programs—we aim to provide programs that are engaging by focussing on the following:

- Whole school approach to curriculums and planning (based on Aus Vels)
- Delivering a broad curriculum which enables all children to pursue personal areas of interest. This includes specialist classes in Music, Physical Education, Japanese and Art. It also includes a large variety of extra-curricular activities such as camps, minor excursions, special theme days, sporting competitions, debating, chess club, choir, instrumental tuition (in drums, guitar, piano, brass), etc.
- Focus on catering for individual learning needs, including:
 - Developing Individual Learning Plans as required
 - Providing intervention for students who need additional support (Reading Recovery, intervention in small groups and teacher aide support for funded students)

- Delivering lessons that cater for a range of abilities, which is driven by a focus on assessment (guided by a Whole School Assessment Schedule)
- Involving students in their learning (setting individual goals, completing self-assessments, writing student report comments, leading 3 way conversations)
- Giving children a degree of choice
- Teacher professional learning is targeted to developing the capacity of our teachers to meet the needs of individual students
- Attitude to school surveys are undertaken with grade 5 and 6 students and used to help us understand how we can better cater for the needs of our students
- Considerable effort goes into making sure the transition of students moving to different year levels is as seamless as possible
- Learning technologies are used extensively as a means of building student engagement and extending learning opportunities

General Environment— we aim to create a safe, welcoming and engaging environment by focussing on the following:

- Dealing with our students in a way that makes each feel welcome and valued
- A whole school approach to the dealing with inappropriate behaviour makes sure that students, staff and parents have a clear sense of our expectations and what happens when they are not met
- The level of yard supervision ensures staff are able to closely monitor what's happening in the yard
- Each class develops its own set of class rules based on whole school expectations
- A great deal of effort has gone into creating a playground which is interesting and can be used for a variety of play styles (Japanese garden, stage, sporting fields, all weather playground areas, adventure playground equipment, cubby, rocks to scramble over, etc.)
- We strive to present all facilities to a high standard to build a collective sense of pride and high expectations

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) 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 them when making decisions and delivering services.

At Buninyong Primary School we take pride in our school values and we strive to adhere to them.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Student:

All students have the right to:

- Feel safe and supported in the school environment
- Be part of fair and respectful whole school behaviour management
- Be treated with tolerance and respect
- Participate in well-run and democratic classrooms
- Develop positive and supportive relationships that value diversity between students, teachers and peers
- Be given the opportunity to communicate ideas and opinions
- Become active participants in their learning
- Social and emotional support when needed

All students have the responsibility to:

- Take ownership of their own learning
- Work with others and take responsibility for their actions
- Show respect to property and all members of the school community
- Attend regularly and on time, and to actively engage in classroom programs and other aspects of school life

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers and Staff:

All teachers and staff have the right to:

- Be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and co-operation
- Be treated with respect and in a fair and equitable manner, free from harassment
- Be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student

All teachers and staff have the responsibility to:

- Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments
- Build positive relationships with students as a basis for engagement and learning
- Treat all members of the school community with respect, fairness and dignity
- Implement the engagement and behaviour policies fairly, reasonably and consistently

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents and Carers:

All parents and carers have the right to:

- Expect a positive and supportive approach to their child's learning
- Know their child is in a safe and happy environment where they are treated fairly and with respect
- Expect communication and participation in their child's learning

All parents and carers have the responsibility to:

- Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress
- Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all children
- Ensure their child's attendance and punctuality is in accordance with the school's values and DEECD guidelines
- Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning

SHARED EXPECTATIONS

We understand that for our school to function effectively it is important that we have a clearly defined set of shared expectations. Following is an outline of the expectations we have:

Expectations of Students

To follow the Student Code of Conduct, which includes:

- Attend school and all classes regularly and on time
- Participate fully in all educational programs, striving for high standards of achievement
- Increasingly take responsibility for learning and progression through the school by setting goals and striving to achieve these goals
- Ask for assistance when necessary
- Respect peers, property, teachers, the school and all other members of the school community
- Behave positively being considerate and supportive of others
- Understand that bullying, including cyber bullying, violence, property damage and inappropriate language, is unacceptable
- Value and care for the school's resources

Expectations of Parents and Carers

To abide by the Parent Code of Conduct, which includes:

- Promote positive educational outcomes for children by taking an active interest in their schooling and assist your children with their school work
- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time
- Communicate clearly and constructively with the school regarding your child's learning and wellbeing (including changed phone numbers and addresses, allergy and first aid needs, custody orders, etc.)
- Model appropriate behaviour
- Promote a climate of mutual respect
- Co-operate with requests from the school
- Ensure their children are adequately equipped for learning
- Notify the school of their child's/childrens' absences
- Attend three way conversations
- Obey all pedestrian and road rules to and from school
- Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students by modelling all of the above

Expectations of School Leadership

- Model appropriate behaviour
- Provide leadership for the staff and students
- Ensure staff, students and the wider school community understand the school expectations
- Provide and manage resources and equipment for learning
- Ensure the curriculum provides for the needs of all students
- Ensure all students are valued and cared for
- Encourage and value the participation of parents in the school
- Promote the school in the community and the community within the school
- Offer support and advice to students, staff and parents
- Explore and invest in innovative multimedia/technology

Expectations of Teachers

To operate in accordance with the National Professional Standards for Teachers and the Buninyong Primary School Quality Teaching and Learning Statement, which includes:

- Model appropriate behaviour
- Promote a positive environment striving for excellence
- Create a stimulating and enjoyable classroom environment
- Provide appropriate, relevant, challenging and inclusive curriculum that gives every student a chance to experience success
- Use teaching and assessment strategies that cater for the varying needs of the students
- Have high expectations of students
- Build positive relationships with all students
- Build positive partnerships with parents/carers and students, that support learning and engagement at school
- Value students, your knowledge and experiences making sure every student is provided with the opportunity to participate successfully
- Promote the school positively and participate in activities that involve the school in the community

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Buninyong Primary School promotes a friendly, considerate and respectful atmosphere both in the classroom and in the school yard. We have zero tolerance for bullying and harassment and strive to ensure that all situations are dealt with consistently and effectively in accordance with this document.

All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act. The effects of harassment or bullying include:

- Poor health – anxiety, depression
- Lower self esteem
- Reduced study performance
- Missed classes, social withdrawal
- Reduced career prospects

Harassment can be defined as: any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Bullying can be defined as: repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

There are two specific types of harassment:

<p>Subtle (The most common): <i>They include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offensive staring and leering• Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference• Racist or smutty comments or jokes• Questions about another's sexual activity• Persistent comments about a person's private life or family• Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body• Offensive name calling	<p>Explicit (obvious): <i>They include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc.• Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing• Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal• Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail• Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks.• Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography Requests for sexual favours. <p><i>Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution</i></p>
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Bullying can involve such things as:

- Grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching, kicking, pushing and shoving
- Publicly excluding a person from your group
- Taking or breaking a person's property
- Knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- Teasing a person because of their looks

Cyber bullying can be defined as: actions that use information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others.

Behaving safely online means:

- Protecting your own privacy and personal information (we used to call it 'stranger danger')
- Selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- Protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- Being proactive in letting someone know if there is something that is 'not quite right'. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher

Students will be encouraged to talk to their teacher or parent if someone they know is experiencing a form of bullying or harassment.

Refer to Section 5 of this document for more information on how the school will deal with actions and consequences related to bullying and harassment.

DEALING WITH BULLYING AT BUNINYONG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Key Points

- Student Declaration – at the start of each year all students and parents sign a Student Declaration which is based on the Student Code of Conduct (see appendix 1)
- Staff ownership of policy and procedures – staff commit to implementing this policy and are reminded of its contents at the beginning of each year. This includes staff understanding their responsibilities as both classroom and yard duty teachers and working collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes
- A record-keeping culture and system to track bullying is essential – “if it’s not recorded it didn’t happen”
- A commitment to a zero approach to bullying
 - “It’s OK to report a bully”
 - “It’s not OK to stand by and watch someone being bullied”
 - A verbal warning by a teacher isn’t sufficient, there has to be a record, i.e. a warning is not a warning until there is a record that a warning was given
- A commitment to improve Student Safety at Buninyong Primary School through the development of a supportive culture in every sector of the school community
- Prompt communication with parents of bullying “targets” to keep them in the loop is seen as essential
- Management of bullying within the school be maintained by school staff – parents to be consulted with, but initiative remains at school administrative level

BULLYING ACTION CHART

DESCRIPTOR	RECORDS KEPT	TREATMENT	COMMUNICATIONS	REFERRAL
<p>LEVEL ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First and second incidences of bullying ▪ Can occur in either the classroom or the yard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behaviour register updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Teacher applies anti-bullying strategies with protagonists and others involved ▪ Remind student of our expectations ▪ Classroom Teacher provides pastoral care to targeted student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Teacher informs Student Welfare Coordinator ▪ Yard Duty Teacher informs Classroom Teacher and/or Student Welfare Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As required
<p>LEVEL TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is where we are starting to see a pattern of bullying ▪ Third incidence of bullying or a more severe first instance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behaviour register updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents contacted ▪ Protagonist and parents meet with Student Welfare Coordinator and Principal ▪ Student Declaration revisited ▪ Restricted playground privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Teacher contacts parents of target upon each instance of bullying. Parents must be kept informed and “in the loop” ▪ Classroom Teacher, Student Welfare Coordinator or Principal contact parents of protagonist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As required
<p>LEVEL THREE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fourth and subsequent incidence of bullying ▪ An established pattern of bullying has developed ▪ “At risk” students include those whose bullying behaviour is resistant to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behaviour register updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Teacher, Student Welfare Coordinator or Principal meet with the parents of the protagonist ▪ Student declaration revisited and behaviour contract developed ▪ Restricted privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Teacher contacts parents of target to inform them of bullying and arrange a meeting with Principal and Student Welfare Coordinator ▪ Classroom Teacher contacts parents of protagonist to meet with Principal and Student Welfare Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protagonist referred to Student Welfare Coordinator ▪ Counselling support for targeted student is sought
<p>LEVEL FOUR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most severe cases of students whose bullying behaviour continues to resist change and upon whom a range of measures including counselling and contracts are having no effect ▪ An entrenched pattern of bullying has been established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behaviour register updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further restriction of privileges ▪ Possible suspension from school ▪ Consideration of reduced hours at school ▪ Possible expulsion from school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Teacher contacts parents of protagonist to meet with Principal and Student Welfare Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further pursuit of counselling options for the protagonist

RESPONSIBILITIES

Classroom Teacher is Responsible for:

- The pastoral care of students in their class
- Instilling in students an understanding of bullying and harassment, and that they are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at BPS
- Instilling in students that it's OK to "report a bully", it's not OK to ignore bullying, ignoring is condoning
- Recording all instances of bullying in the yard and classroom in the students' files (targets, protagonists and 'others involved')
- Recording all instances of bullying involving their students reported to them by Yard Duty or other teachers i.e. responsible for maintaining files on all of their students
- Prompt communication with the parents of their students who are both targets and protagonists of bullying i.e. every instance of bullying from Level Two upwards
- Dealing with Level One bullying using accepted anti-bullying strategies in which they have been trained
- Referring to the Student Welfare Coordinator (Assistant Principal) any cases which they feel unable/uncomfortable dealing with
- Referring Level Two and above to the Student Welfare Coordinator and Principal
- Informing victim of what follow up has occurred

Yard Duty Teacher is Responsible for:

- Monitoring student behaviour in the yard and promoting a zero tolerance approach to bullying
- The accurate recording of instances of bullying reported, observed and treated during the course of their yard
- Recording all instances of bullying and sending them to the SWC or principal for them to be added to the student's file
- Providing classroom teachers with records of any bullying involving classroom teachers' students
- Ensuring that each instance is dealt with only by the relevant staff and not allow students to be unfairly accused by 'reputation' or second-hand reporting
- Informing victim of what follow up has occurred

Student Welfare Coordinator (Assistant Principal) is Responsible for:

- Providing regular training for staff in anti-bullying strategies
- Counselling students who are targets and protagonists of bullying
- Tracking bullying within the school, especially Level Two and higher
- Reporting to Principal
- Providing Principal and staff with regular updates on Student Safety

Principal is Responsible for:

- Setting the tone of an anti-bullying culture at the school
 - Implementing practical systematic behaviours that ensure the intolerance of bullying at all levels in the school is operationalized and integrated
 - Overseeing staff duties
 - Overall student safety at the school
 - Dealing with parents and families
 - Reporting on student safety data
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SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required. Actions and consequences are developed in consultation with and agreed on by representatives from the whole-school community, including students. This fosters a cohesive and consistent response to poor attendance and inappropriate behaviour.

These actions and consequences are incremental (a staged response) and are applied fairly and consistently to increase the likelihood that student connection to school is maintained. Equal emphasis is placed on issuing positive consequences for meeting high expectations.

Actions and consequences have an educational role and aim to foster positive relationships and retain the dignity of the student. Actions and consequences that isolate a student from learning are avoided where possible.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours are supported most effectively 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 with their learning
- Implementing school-wide positive and educative behaviour support strategies

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, can be responded to through a staged response that has a prevention and early intervention, data-based focus, including:

- Understanding the student
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student's learning program

Flow charts indicating a staged response to inappropriate behaviours in the classroom and the yard appear on the following 2 pages.

Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

A student should only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success, or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour or where the wellbeing or safety of another student is at risk.

SUSPENSION PROCESS FLOW CHART

NOTE: In determining whether to suspend a student the principal must ensure that suspension is appropriate to the student's:

- behaviour for which the student is being suspended
- disability or additional learning needs
- residential and social circumstances
- educational needs
- age

Suspension being considered

- Student support group convened to inform the student and their parents/carers that a suspension is being considered
- Student support group should develop a range of strategies to support the student and parents/carers to address the area of concern and avoid suspension where possible

SUSPENSION

IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

NOTE: Where the principals considers that due to the severity of the situation and the possibility of immediate threat to another person, that an immediate action required, the principal may implement an immediate suspension (refer to the Department's *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*) prior to a student support group being convened.

Immediate suspension can only be used where there are grounds for suspension normally **and** where the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students are at significant risk.

Give immediate verbal notification to the student and **parents/carers.**

Provide supervision on the school premises until student can be collected or until the end of the school day.

Schedule a student support group within 48 hours of suspension and:

- Provide student and parents/carers with a Notice of Suspension and the *Procedures for Suspension* brochure
- Develop a Student Absence Learning Plan and a Return to School Plan (as appropriate)
- Provide school council president with the Notice of Suspension

NON IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

Suspension following student support group.

Convene student support group to explain to the student and parents/carers:

- The reasons for the suspensions
- The school days on which the suspension will occur
- Where it will occur
- Provide contact details for additional support services
- Develop Student Absence Learning Plan

If the suspension is for five days or more provide details of the post-suspension student support group meeting.

Provide student, parents/carers and the school council president with student's Notice of Suspension prior to the day on which the suspension occurs.

Provide the student and parents/carers with a copy of the information brochure *Procedures for Suspension.*

Schedule a post-suspension student support group if the suspension is for five or more days.

EXPULSION PROCESS FLOW CHART

