

# **Valkstone Primary School**

## **Student Engagement Policy**

**Produced in consultation  
with the school community**

**To be read in conjunction with**  
*Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines*

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# Valkstone Primary School

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

### **Implementation:**

#### **1. Valkstone Primary School Profile Statement (2014)**

Valkstone continues to grow both in population and facilities. With a student population of 594, the 2014 school year has begun with 43.4 full time equivalent full time staff: two principal class leaders, 34 teachers and 9 education support staff. Twenty five classes are housed in well-maintained and resourced learning spaces.

All teachers use interactive whiteboards and the computer ratio is 1:2.1, a mix of desktops, notebooks and iPads. Effective teaching teams plan and support highly engaging instruction.

Student achievement is at or above the expected level in all areas of English and Maths, with students demonstrating above average growth.

Specialist programs are: Art, Music, Physical Education, EAL (English as Additional Language), L.O.T.E. – Japanese and ICT/Multi-media. The L.O.T.E. program uses iPads and teleconferences are held regularly with our sister school, Tako Elementary, near Osaka.

Environmental education and student initiatives have established a vegetable garden, outdoor learning area and frog pond.

A well-stocked library, managed by a technician, is used by all classes weekly and is open at lunchtimes as a recreation option for the children.

Sporting facilities include: an indoor basketball stadium used for P.E. classes and whole school assemblies each Monday morning, outdoor netball and basketball courts, a full sized oval with cricket pitch, nets and football goal posts, a five hundred metre running track and multiple bat tennis courts. Four playground installations provide multiple sources of fitness fun and an outdoor chess board with large chess pieces challenges mental muscles.

Our strong values education program is embedded in daily practice, producing a positive school culture that has consistent and clear expectations for high achievement and respectful behavior.

Student leadership programs include buddies, Junior School Council and the Environment Team.

Extra curricula programs include a whole school concert at Robert Blackwood Hall in September each year, Maths Olympiad, University of NSW Competitions, chess, instrumental music, choir and guitar.

School Council is proactive and the parent community highly supportive of educational programs, fundraising and community events.

Out of School Hours Care. O.S.H.C. has attained a high standard of accreditation in Quality Assurance and has been granted a full licence under the Children's Services Act 1996.

Valkstone is a vibrant, equitable, supportive learning community for students and teachers.

#### **2. Whole-school Prevention Statement**

##### **How we support positive behaviours and relationships**

Valkstone has a significant focus on student wellbeing and engagement. Many positive strategies are used to connect and extend students, including engaging curriculum and extra curricula programs such as health and physical education, music, visual arts, EAL and LOTE (Japanese), ICT, English and Mathematics Challenges, camping, excursions, gardening, living skills, Life Education, drug education and chess. There is also a strong commitment and high level of engagement in all aspects of the district interschool sporting programs.

Valkstone values the active involvement of parents in the learning and social development of each student. It seeks to foster this cooperative approach with parents through initial sharing of information at interviews, reports, parent-teacher interviews, phone calls and other forms of communication, meetings and the use of student diaries.

In encouraging and building this cooperative approach, it is acknowledged there will be behaviours and events that occur that compromise this ideal. When this occurs, the school will use positive and proactive behaviour management approaches, based on assertive discipline and restorative practices. Where appropriate the school will inform and involve parents in these processes through a Student Support Group. The current Discipline Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy are attached

A key component of the school's approach to prevention is teaching positive behaviours and the use of logical consequences to address both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. The school practices a strong values program based on 'Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms'. The focus is on developing a whole school culture through a cohesive team approach to behaviour management; one that empowers the whole staff to commit to managing their own behaviour and student behaviour positively and proactively. An intended objective is to produce teachers who are skilled in managing all classroom interactions, resulting in substantial change in student behaviour, attitude to learning and hence, student achievement. The school continually reinforces positive behaviour and this is supported by our "Code of Conduct" that involves all students, teachers and parents.

The foundation of our positive school culture is the active participation of all members of the school community so they feel valued, safe and secure, are provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and have every opportunity to meet their personal and educational potential.

Our school is committed to developing a school environment that:

- Creates a positive school culture focussing on student connectedness and relationships
- Creates a school environment where students feel safe and supported with high expectations and fair and respectful whole school behaviour management systems.
- Encourages students to take responsibility for their learning and actions.
- Provides multiple opportunities for parents/carers and the community to be actively involved in the school.
- Encourages student voice by providing opportunities for students to contribute their ideas and provide feedback to policies and practices. These opportunities will be created through student leadership, Junior School Council, student forums and class meetings.
- Aims to improve student attendance levels and reduce late arrivals and early leavers through ongoing implementation of 'It's Not Okay to be Away' strategies and direct intervention measures for persistent absenteeism. This includes daily follow up with chronic absentees and access for families to support as appropriate.
- Provides a positive and self sustaining school culture that is informed by the principles of learning and teaching and E5.

### **Inclusion, Wellbeing & Transitions**

The transition program aims to support students throughout their education including their time at kindergarten, primary school and secondary school. The transition program will include:

- A Buddy system
- A support program established for new enrolments to the school including organising a school buddy and welcoming the family through contact with other parents.
- Four day prep transition program that involves students and parents. The program develops open communication between all stakeholders in order to make a smooth transition from kinder to school.
- Formal contact with previous and feeder schools, specifically through transition Information sharing at Prep and Year 6 -7
- The support of students as they progress through the grades.
- Step Up program in November and December to support grade transition
- Parent/teacher interviews with new parents to the school
- Parent/teacher interviews formally (twice a year) and informally (when required)

The Wellbeing program includes:

- Family Life

- Building Strengths
- Maths Olympiad
- Life Education
- Lunchtime Clubs
- Cross- age learning
- Buddies
- Wakakirri
- Drug Education
- Junior School Council
- Team Green
- Choir
- Bike Education – years 4 to 6
- Camping program-years 4 to 6
- Moving Up Program-year 6 (Glen Eira Council)
- Relevant learning programs that address social and emotional wellbeing

The School Council and leadership team regularly consults with students, parents/carers, support organisations and the broader community to ensure we are responsive to students’ social, emotional, cognitive and cultural needs.

Student voice is encouraged through participation in the Junior School Council, the Team Green Program and student leadership roles. The formulation of classroom protocols, various student forums and educational decision making committees including school council, ensure that all members have a voice .

Students have multiple opportunities to input into the creation of their educational experience, including the physical learning environment, which provides them with a sense of ownership and allows them to feel safe and supported in the environment they have created. The school continues to build on the opportunities for our students to take on meaningful responsibilities both within the school and the broader community. Student leaders are responsible for running the weekly whole school assembly and lunch time activities.

Our positive school culture is also predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, the leadership team is actively occupied in developing classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse learning needs. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and mutually respectful relationships between staff and students is promoted through teams that encourage innovative pedagogy developed using the Department’s E5 instructional model and AusVELS.

The school has identified key staff members to address social and emotional issues. These may be dealt with in an informal manner and if needed, in a formal manner.

## **Prevention Programs**

### **Attendance**

Valkstone Primary School understands that regular attendance is a key to engagement and maximises every student’s ability to learn and our teachers’ ability to teach effectively. Our focus includes reducing family holidays taken during school terms and improved monitoring of attendance in real time. We have actively embraced the “It’s not OK to be Away” approach by including reminders and information periodically in the school Newsletter and intervention with families with chronic absenteeism. This intervention includes, support group meetings and daily phone calls from staff where appropriate.

### **Behaviour Management Education (BME)**

Staff members are committed to learning a more cohesive approach to effectively managing behaviour. We aim to maximise engagement, and build pride, respect and responsibility in each student. This is extended beyond the classroom and is the basis for respectful communication, relationships and how to respond to behavioural issues.

When things go wrong	When someone has been hurt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened?</li> <li>• What were you thinking at the time?</li> <li>• What have you thought about since?</li> <li>• Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?</li> <li>• What do you think you need to do to make things right?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you think when you realized what had happened?</li> <li>• What impact has this incident had on you and others?</li> <li>• What has been the hardest thing for you?</li> <li>• What do you think needs to happen to make things right?</li> </ul>

**Staged Response**

The implementation of preventative and early intervention measures are part of our school’s staged response to creating a positive school culture. All serious incidents are recorded in incident reports and sent to the Assistant Principal to establish patterns of behaviour. Any imposed consequences are documented and filed electronically and on hard copy. The school constitutes a student support group to devise strategies and approaches to address the behaviour or repeated behaviours. This may include intervention from specialist services and external agencies. The Behaviour Management and Restorative Practices approaches are intended to move the focus away from a punitive consequence that is based on the establishment of wrong doing. Rather, they seek to value and support those involved so that they feel empowered to take positive action to address the situation, learn from it and move forward. Restorative practice is about being respectful of every member of our school community, encouraging responsible behaviour and actions and ensuring that personal pride and dignity is maintained.

**Professional Learning**

Teacher Professional Learning is given high priority at Valkstone Primary School to ensure the strategies and approaches adopted are implemented with integrity. The literacy and numeracy improvements processes are being led by our English and Mathematics Leading Teachers and implemented through a teacher mentor and classroom coaching program. The leadership team will continue to participate in leadership development programs; the whole staff will participate in a variety of professional learning programs to support student engagement.

### **3. Rights and Responsibilities**

*The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2010)* outline 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.

#### **3.1 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.

#### **3.2 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	• religious belief or activity
• race	• sex	• sexual orientation
• personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).		

#### **5.3 *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 Department of Education and Early childhood Development (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

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance web site.

#### **3.4 Students with disabilities**

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)1992*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- The nature of the student's disability
- His or her preferred adjustment
- Any adjustments that have been provided previously
- Any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- Costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- Costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- Benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- Any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DEECD and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

### **3.5 Bullying and Harassment**

#### **Definitions**

**Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

**Bullying** is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

**Cyberbullying** is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings)

Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:

- Teasing and being made fun of
- Spreading of rumours online
- Sending unwanted messages
- Defamation.

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. 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

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

**Subtle: (The most common)**

Examples include:

- 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.

**Explicit: (obvious)**

Examples include:

- 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.

Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

**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

**Cyberbullying**

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:

- The language you use and the things you say
- How you treat others
- Respecting people's intellectual property (eg copyright)

- Visiting appropriate places.

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, the above points will be the responsibility of the parent/carer and at school the responsibility of the teaching staff.

If you are being harassed or bullied you should:

- Tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that you feel comfortable with.

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially

<p><b>All members of Valkstone Primary School community have a right to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully participate in an environment free of discriminatory behaviour – including racist, sexist, ability-based, class-based and homophobic forms of harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, vilification, violence, intimidation, abuse and exclusion</li> <li>• Be treated with respect and dignity.</li> <li>• Feel valued, safe and supported in an environment that encourages freedom of thought and expression</li> </ul>		
<p><b>All Members of the Valkstone Primary School community have a responsibility to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge their obligations under the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1995</i> and the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> and communicate these obligations to all members of the school community.</li> <li>• Participate and contribute to a learning environment that supports the learning of self and others</li> <li>• Ensure their actions and views do not have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of other members of the school community</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Students have the right to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn and socialise without interference or intimidation in a safe and secure environment</li> <li>• Be treated with respect and fairness as individuals</li> <li>• Expect a learning program that meets their individual needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff have the right to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect to be able to work in an atmosphere of order and cooperation</li> <li>• Use discretion in the application of rules and consequences</li> <li>• Receive respect and support from the school community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parents have the right to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know that their children are in a safe, supportive learning environment where they are treated fairly and with respect.</li> <li>• Expect a positive and supportive approach to their child's learning</li> <li>• Expect communication and participation both in their child's education and behaviour</li> </ul>

All students have a responsibility to	All staff have a responsibility to	All parents have a responsibility to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be prepared to learn</li> <li>• Explore their full potential</li> <li>• Respect the rights of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build positive relationships with students as basis for engagement and learning</li> <li>• Use and manage the resources of the school to create stimulating, safe and purposeful learning</li> <li>• Treat all members of the school community with respect, fairness and dignity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build positive relationships with members of the school community</li> <li>• Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials and uniform</li> <li>• Promote respectful relationships</li> </ul>

#### **4. Shared Expectations**

Valkstone Primary School has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and the rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive in that they set out what are accepted and appropriate behaviours for our community. Parents, students and staff have contributed to the development of these shared expectations.

The school's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

**Care and Compassion**

Care for self and others

**Integrity**

Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds.

**Doing Your Best**

Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence.

**Respect**

Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view.

**Fair Go**

Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society.

**Responsibility**

Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment.

**Freedom**

Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others.

**Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion**

Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others.

**Honesty and Trustworthiness**

Be honest, sincere and seek the truth.

**The values of Valkstone Primary School are demonstrated by the following shared expectations and behaviours:**

**HIGH STANDARDS**

- The classroom is a place where we actively participate and strive for personal best.
- The way we behave shows we have pride in our school, ourselves and our family.

**RESPECT**

- We treat others as we would like to be treated.
- We work, learn and play in an environment of mutual respect.
- We value individual and collective diversity.

- We play and work safely at all times.

### **CARE and RESPONSIBILITY**

- We take responsibility for our own behaviour and understand the logical consequences that follow.
- We are responsible for our learning and the learning of others.
- We will endeavour to be self-motivated learners.
- We take care of our own and others personal property and space.

### **Expectations - Staff**

#### **Engagement**

The leadership team will:

- Uphold the right of every child to receive an education.
- Ensure the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligations under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation.
- Collaborate with the Valkstone Primary School community to develop policies and procedures consistent with its values and expectations and the Department's Guidelines.
- Identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning experiences, facilities, student services and community linkages which are inclusive and responsive to student needs.

Teachers will:

- Develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage learners.
- Deliver curriculum and assessment that meets individual students needs and challenges and extends students learning as appropriate.
- Develop positive and meaningful relationships with students that promote engagement, wellbeing and hence, maximise learning opportunities and achievement.
- Provide opportunities for student voice by developing a positive school culture within and outside of the classroom.

#### **Attendance**

In compliance with Departmental procedures school staff will:

- Promote regular attendance with all members of the school community
- Communicate clearly the process for notification of student absence
- Monitor and follow up on absences

#### **Behaviour**

Valkstone Primary School will support and promote positive behaviours by developing and implementing shared behavioural expectations with the school community and by delivering cohesive and consistent responses to behavioural issues. All members of school community are expected to participate in the educational environment with enthusiasm and mutual respect. Valkstone is committed to engaging all students and will only exclude students as a matter of last resort in extreme circumstances.

The leadership team will:

- Lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues by incorporating student wellbeing at the centre of school business
- Monitor the profile of behaviour issues at the school and the effectiveness of implemented strategies
- Provide appropriate professional development opportunities for all staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours

Teachers at Valkstone Primary School will:

- Use the Student Engagement Policy as a basis for negotiating a class-based set of shared expectations with students
- Teach students social competencies through curriculum content and pedagogical approach
- Employ positive interaction and sound behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviours expected from students and which focus on supporting positive behaviours
- Build a collegiate atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and support each other to reflect on one's own behaviour, interactions and behaviour management approach

- Involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary

### **Expectations - Student**

All students are expected to:

- Respect the rights of others and value and learn from the differences of others.
- Have high expectations that they can learn.
- Be prepared to learn and reflect on their learning.

### **Attendance**

All students are expected to come to school every day that the school is open to students. If students can't attend, an explanation from their parents/carers must be provided by contacting the school prior to or on the day of the absence. Students should bring a written note to their teacher, as well, on the day they return to school. Students should arrive at each class on time and ready to learn.

### **Behaviour**

Students are expected to:

- Support each other's learning by behaving in a way that is courteous and respectful.
- Have high expectations that they can learn.
- Be considerate and supportive of others.
- Demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contributes to a positive school environment that is safe, inclusive and happy.
- Understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language, inappropriate use of technology and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable.
- Be aware of the anti-bullying prevention policy which is attached.

### **Expectations – Parents/Carers**

#### **Engagement**

- Parents/carers are expected to support the school's efforts to educate young people to live in a diverse world by promoting an understanding and appreciation of diversity in the home.
- Parents/carers should also help the school to provide student-centred responses by providing all relevant information to the school.
- Parents/carers are expected to actively participate in supporting their child's learn by building a positive relationship with the school through attendance at information evenings, student- parent-teacher meetings, student activities, celebrations, student support groups and responding to communications in a timely manner.

#### **Attendance**

Parents/carers are expected to ensure that enrolment details for their children are correct, that their children attend school regularly and that, when a child is absent from school, they advise the school prior to or on the day of the absence. Students should also bring a written, signed note to their teacher on the day they return to school. Parents should support their children in arriving at each class on time and ready to learn.

#### **Behaviour**

Parents/carers should understand the school's behavioural expectations and work with it to promote a consistent approach that supports their child's learning, engagement and endeavour both in and out of school.

#### **Diversity in the School Community**

The school aims to address diversity by:

- Maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce which is better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community.
- Attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer.
- Increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce.

- Enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs.
- Creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

## **5. Actions and Consequences**

### **Appropriate Behaviour**

Valkstone Primary School acknowledges students who meet the shared expectations outlined in this policy through recognition and encouragement as outlined in the logical consequences outlined below.

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

When students do not meet these expectations, a staged response is implemented consistent with the logical consequences outlined below and the Discipline Policy (attached). This is to be implemented using the positive BME / restorative approach outlined in the prevention section and summarised as following:

The BME / restorative approach is used to address student behaviour in various settings and levels to:

- Re-establish significant relationships;
- Ensure consequences for misbehaviour are relevant and meaningful;
- Foster and develop individual responsibility and empathy

<b>Appropriate Behaviour</b>	<b>Inappropriate Behaviour</b>
<p>Appropriate behaviour will be recognised in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebration assemblies</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• References</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Leadership opportunities</li> <li>• Positive feedback</li> <li>• The right to represent the school</li> <li>• Graduation</li> <li>• The right to attend excursions, incursions and special events</li> </ul>	<p>Inappropriate behaviour will be addressed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking to the student and referring them to the shared expectations</li> <li>• Discussing appropriate behaviours in the classroom</li> <li>• Contact with parents</li> <li>• Making changes to the student’s learning program to better equip him/her to behave positively</li> <li>• Implementing restorative practices</li> <li>• Establishing agreed consequences (may include clean up damage to property)</li> <li>• Establishing tasks designed to better equip him/her to behave positively in the future</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Teaching appropriate behaviours</li> <li>• Payment for damage sought.</li> <li>• Withdrawal of privileges</li> <li>• Withdrawal of student temporarily from class</li> <li>• Conducting Student Support Group meetings</li> <li>• Student detention</li> <li>• Negotiating alternative pathways or settings for student</li> <li>• Suspension or expulsion. (in line with DEECD guidelines)</li> </ul>

### **Ongoing Behaviour Issues**

Where students exhibit ongoing inappropriate behaviour patterns; as part of staged response a range of strategies will be used. These may include:

**Discussing** the behaviour problems and reaching an agreement for future behaviour. This could include a behaviour contract

**Explicit Teaching** of appropriate behaviours.

**Monitoring and providing feedback** (student behaviour contract)

**Time Out:** allowing students a “Cooling Off” period

**Withdrawal:** a student may be withdrawn from an activity, class, camp or excursion due to inappropriate behaviour and provided with an alternative educational setting within the school.

**Counselling** for individuals in order to modify inappropriate behaviour

**Discipline/Student Support Group Meeting** involving parents/caregivers and/or relevant DEECD support staff or outside agencies to assist with modifying behaviour

**Detention** will be given to a student for serious and/or continual misconduct. Detention after school will be imposed after parents/caregivers have received notification.

**Suspension & Expulsion:** For serious disciplinary measures we follow DEECD Engaging Schools are Effective Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines 2013 developed in response to Ministerial Order No.625 (See attached Appendix)

### **Data Analysis**

The school uses a variety of data to gauge the level of engagement of students and the processes that need to be employed to maintain and improve the levels of all student engagement:

- Student Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey
- Staff Opinion Survey
- Anecdotal Observations
- Number and type of incidents reported to the Wellbeing Coordinator
- Feedback from the School Community
- School Council Forums
- Junior School Council Reports

Ratified by School Council: May 2016

Evaluation Date: 2019

## References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm</a>
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm</a>
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	<a href="http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf">http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf</a>
Disability Standards for Education	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm</a>
Safe Schools	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm</a> <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm</a> <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm</a>
Charter of Human Rights	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm</a> <a href="http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/">http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/</a>
Equal Opportunity Act	<a href="http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eo/eoact.htm">http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eo/eoact.htm</a>
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm</a>
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	<a href="http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf">http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf</a>
Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984	<a href="http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/sda1984209/">http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/sda1984209/</a>

## Appendix

1. Student Discipline Policy
2. Student Welfare Policy
3. Anti-Bullying Policy
4. Procedures for suspension
5. Procedures for Expulsion

# Valkstone Primary School, No. 4778



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## DISCIPLINE POLICY

### BASIC BELIEF

By fostering self-discipline, we enable students to develop into responsible members of society.

### 1. PURPOSE

The aim of the discipline policy is to ensure that each child has unhindered and equal access to all school programs and activities in a safe and supportive environment.

### 2. GUIDELINES

- 2.1 Safety and the right to learn should remain the prime considerations in all matters relating to discipline. All staff are advised that the administration of corporal punishment is not acceptable at Valkstone P.S.
- 2.2 A common sense approach should be reflected in all requirements implemented through the policy.
- 2.3 Support should be available at all phases of implementation.
- 2.4 Whilst the policy should remain positive in its implementation, everyone should be clear on its purpose.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 A Code of Behaviour is available, outlining the rights and responsibilities of members of the school community.
- 3.2 There will be a consistency of expectations and practice throughout the school.
- 3.3 Strategies adopted will include the pairing of classes for teacher support, support for students, parental contact and outside agency support when necessary.
- 3.4 Classroom strategies will be drawn from a selection that allows for flexibility based on individual differences and varying circumstances.

#### **These will include:**

Reflective discipline	Restorative practices
Detention for task completion.	Assertive discipline
Non participation in special activities	Exclusion / "time out"
Behaviour Management Plans	Suspension

- 3.5 Classroom strategies will include agreed behaviour and consequences supported by positive reinforcement of acceptable and desirable behaviour.

A whole school program has been adopted to develop resilience along with nominations for values awards each term.

### 4. EVALUATION

- 4.1 Student Wellbeing team meets regularly to review whole school programs and practices. Individual progress is monitored through Compass data.
- 4.2 A review of the policy will be completed regularly
- 4.3 Parent Opinion Survey.
- 4.4 Student Attitudes to School Survey

Reviewed and ratified: 2016

To be reviewed: 2019

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## STUDENT WELFARE POLICY

### ***BASIC BELIEF***

Valkstone Primary School believes students learn best in a safe, friendly, supportive environment in which opportunities exist for each student to develop resilience, positive self-esteem and to achieve their full potential.

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide clear guidelines for teachers, parents and students as to the school's expectations of student behaviour and how staff will respond to them.
- 1.2 To assist students to take responsibility for their own behaviour, develop positive self-esteem and respect for the rights and needs of others.
- 1.3 To provide a positive, supportive environment that promotes effective teaching and learning interaction.
- 1.4 To develop learning programs that reflect the needs, backgrounds, perspective and interests of individual students.

### **2. GUIDELINES**

- 2.1 The Student Welfare Policy compliments the 'Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy'
- 2.2 The Code of Behaviour fosters a whole school approach to student welfare by promoting consistency in expectations and practices that affect teaching and learning opportunities.
- 2.3 Students with specific educational, social, emotional or behavioural needs are identified throughout the school.
- 2.4 A Student Welfare Committee consisting of teaching staff operates and meets as required to discuss and develop a response to discipline or welfare concerns.
- 2.5 Units of work related to student welfare will be developed in accordance with AusVELs and the Australian Curriculum

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION**

- 3.1 A Code of Behaviour is displayed in all teaching areas and copies provided to all staff and families in the school community.
- 3.2 At the start of the school year, each class reviews the expectations of the Code of Behaviour and may develop additional rules and consequences specific to their own class.
- 3.3 Individual Learning or Behaviour Management Plans are developed to support the educational needs of some students.
- 3.4 Additional support services may include individual or small group instruction, classroom aides, referral to the School Guidance Officer or other appropriate agencies.
- 3.5 The Student Welfare Coordinator assists the Principal in coordinating support programs and personnel.
- 3.6 Drug education, social skills, healthy living and values education related to AusVELs and the Australian Curriculum are delivered through classroom and whole school activities.
- 3.7 Staff access professional development activities to improve teaching and learning opportunities and outcomes for all students.

#### **4. EVALUATION**

- 4.1 Observation and monitoring of student behaviour
- 4.2 Staff and Parent Opinion Survey data and Student Attitudes to School data on the Student Opinion Survey
- 4.3 Cyclic review of Health and Personal Development curriculum, Code of Behaviour and related policies.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with related policies: Discipline, Code of Behaviour, Program for Students with a Disability, ESL and Special Needs, Drug Education, Health and Personal Development and Student Engagement and Wellbeing and Policy

Reviewed and Accepted: 2013

To be Reviewed: 2017

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## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Basic Belief**

All children have the right to attend school and feel happy and safe. This policy focuses on the processes that are to be followed to ensure that this fundamental right is observed and respected by all members of the Valkstone school community.

### **Purpose**

Valkstone Primary School believes in providing a safe and happy environment for all children. The school is committed to ensuring that all individuals are responsible for promoting a caring environment for everyone.

If anyone is subjected to behaviour that is hurtful, threatening or frightening and this behaviour is repeated over time, then bullying or harassment has occurred. Bullying behaviour is defined by Rigby (1996) as 'repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons.' Bullying can take many forms.

- **Victimisation/Exclusion:** may include repeated exclusion from activities, being 'frozen out' where the victim is treated as though they don't exist, stand over tactics, picking on others, threats to 'get' people.
- **Physical:** may include invasion of personal space, fighting, pushing, shoving and gestures.
- **Visual:** may include damaging other people's possessions, offensive notes or material, graffiti, non-verbal signals used to silence or intimidate victims.
- **Verbal:** may include offensive language, putting people down behind their backs, name calling, picking on people because of their race, gender or religious creed.
- **Sexual:** may include touching or brushing against one in a sexual manner, sexually oriented jokes, drawings of , or writing about someone's body, using offensive names or commenting on someone's morals, unwanted invitations of a sexual nature, asking about someone's private life.
- **Extortion:** may include physically stronger and more powerful students bullying other students into giving up possessions, buying food or drink, doing school work for them, or in some instances, committing minor offences for them.
- **Cyber:** Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS). Examples of cyber bullying include teasing, spreading rumors online, ending unwanted messages, or defamation.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Prevention**

The Student Engagement Policy and the Student Code of Conduct need to be read in conjunction with this policy. They set out clear guidelines for the implementation of programs to promote positive self-esteem, a strong values program and social skills. All teachers are expected to follow assertive discipline procedures and to implement programs to their classes throughout the year.

Throughout the year teachers are expected to discuss and raise issues with students about bullying and to be proactive in their approach to developing coping strategies with all students. Activities should be undertaken whereby teachers work on issues of inclusive play, using appropriate language, cooperative play in games, playing by the rules and how to sort out disagreements in play/games. This action forms the link between the positive social skills program and the anti-bullying intervention measures.

Buddy systems and support programs are set up at the start of the year between different grade levels to link groups and individuals so that there is a positive support network set up in the playground for students who need support.

The school will consult with parents when appropriate and organise information to help parents work through issues, analyse problems and improve their child's self esteem.

### **Intervention**

Students from years five and six will be surveyed each year. From the survey the school can determine the extent of the bullying or related matters, within the school and the areas that need to be addressed. The surveys will be analysed and discussed with the staff and School Council.

Ongoing professional development for teachers and information sessions for parents will be organised as the need arises.

Children will be involved in anti-bullying and resilience programs throughout the year. Continuous monitoring across the school to ensure incidents are reported and dealt with as they occur.

Class teacher, section coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal will be involved with incidents of bullying, depending on the nature. Parents will be notified if incidents continue to be of concern.

Procedures to be implemented may include:

- Counselling
- Development of a contract
- Restricted yard access
- Detention
- Interview with parents

Formal discipline procedures (as set out by DEECD) may be instigated at the Principal's discretion.

Information, current programs and planned parent and student sessions relating to bullying and feedback will be published in the school newsletter when appropriate.

### **Evaluation**

The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated by

- Number and seriousness of incidents about the school
- Results gained from the student survey
- Anecdotal evidence of children's ability to solve disputes
- Parent opinion from the Annual survey
- Analysis of all information

Reviewed and Accepted: 2014

To be Reviewed: 2018