



No 8

Avenel Primary School

"Creating learners, Growing Good People, Giving Something Back"

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

Values

Avenel Primary School is proud of its community spirit; it's caring and nurturing for all, the team work between the staff, students, parents and School Council. The welfare of all students is paramount. The school aims to provide optimal learning opportunities for every student across all curriculum areas, as outlined in the AUSVELS (The Australian Curriculum). Our future vision is to be a family based community of learning, which supports all members in a happy and safe environment.

As a school community we aspire to be a friendly place to learn, work and visit, to be a school where our children are known individually, where our staff is progressive and forward thinking and to be a school which is committed to success and belonging for every student. There is a strong sense of ownership by our small village community with good humour, honesty, tolerance and hard work involved. Avenel Primary School Council and staff continue to advance the interests of our students through working together towards the realisation of common goals in education. Our decisions on long term vision and short term priorities have been driven by data; our actions and practices directed by best available modern research. We have developed whole school team teaching approaches and a stage, not age organisation of student learning groups. Our school is committed to developing strong literacy and numeracy classroom teaching practices with clearly articulated lesson focus and success criteria and an inquiry learning philosophy.

Respectful relationships are the basis of our school community. Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. We pride ourselves as a school that promotes community recognition and acceptance of the equality of gender, the equality of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their abilities, their age or specific learning requirements.

While we believe in equality for all, we also emphasise the value of difference. The following values underpin the beliefs of our community and outlines what is important in guiding our actions: We value the following behaviours in our school environment:

- Creating Great Learners – Be interested, ask questions
- Growing Good People – Learn how to be mates
- Build a Caring Community – give something back, make a contribution.

These behaviours draw from our values which are as follows:

- Inclusion – every face has a place.
- Responsibility – we are responsible for our choices, actions and mindsets
- Commitment to learning – we are here to learn and improve our skills and performance.
- Respect – show respect for others, for evidence, for the rules of our society
- High expectations, high support – we aim high and help each other to succeed.

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WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT

Avenel Primary School aims to establish a happy, safe and supportive learning environment where the welfare of all children is a high priority and is maintained as a shared responsibility of the school and the community. Our motto "Creating Great Learners, Growing Good People & Building a caring Community" is a whole community commitment. It means all children at our centre can achieve well-rounded success and excellence. We strive to provide a quality education that will enable children to participate and contribute to the community. We want them to become informed lifelong learners and tolerant and responsible citizens. We strive to foster a positive centre environment free of bias and bullying and where children accept and respect the rights and responsibilities of all community members. We encourage children to develop positive and caring relationships with others. We also encourage children to develop a positive self-image and independence. We want them to be engaged in their learning and to feel connected to the centre so that they are keen to attend and to participate in a manner that upholds the rights of all community members.

Engaging Students Through The Effective Schools Model & Kids Matter Framework:

It is a core belief at Avenel Primary that professional, personalised teaching and learning drives student learning. We believe that when learners know the purpose of their learning, can describe their learning goals and how they can achieve these, then engagement is created. We also believe that social and emotional well-being are the bedrock of academic success. At Avenel Primary, our approach to academic engagement draws from the Effective Schools model illustrated below:



Purposeful Teaching & Focus On Teaching & Learning.

At Avenel Primary School, direct teaching is our core pedagogical method. This results from John Hattie's research which demonstrated that direct instruction has the highest effect size of all pedagogical strategies. We demonstrate this commitment through the following actions:

- By holding the belief that students and their learning are the centre of a school's work.

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- By creating learning for every student within our school.
- Delivering lessons which have clear learning intentions and success criteria.
- Ensuring our students understand the "what, why and how" of each lesson.
- Using pedagogical strategies which draw from the Literacy and Numeracy placemats.
- Using student data to inform our planning.
- Guaranteeing and protecting 2 hours of literacy and one hour of numeracy instruction each day.
- By thoroughly knowing all of our students – academically, emotionally and socially.
- By developing an engaging curriculum and using engaging methods to deliver that curriculum
- By providing students with frequent task and process level feedback.

High Expectations Of All Learners & Accountability

In very simple terms, we will receive from students what we expect from students. High expectations of all learners is the first rung on the ladder of high achievement. As Richard Elmore states, "the task predicts the performance."

- We demonstrate our commitment to high expectations by:
- Holding the belief that all students can learn.
- Believing that socio-economic circumstances can be overcome.
- Pitching learning tasks at the instructional level of each student.
- Having challenging goals for all students, regardless of their current level of achievement.
- By focussing on student growth rather than raw scores.
- By using data to inform our discussions of what is effective within our own teaching or in our school wide programs.

Accountability

As professionals, we are responsible for the learning growth (social, emotional and academic) of all the students we interact with. We demonstrate this when we:

- Take responsibility for the learning data of the students we teach.
- By examining the effect our teaching is having upon student data
- By tracking individual student improvements / concerns
- Provide parents with an honest, evidence informed picture of their child's learning.
- Monitor student progress through assessment and use the data from our assessment to inform our teaching.
- Create Individual Learning Plans for students at risk.
- By using a common planning template and publishing our planners on *Dropbox* before the start of each teaching week.

Learning Communities & Stimulating & Secure Learning Environment

At Avenel Primary School, we have led the way in the development of Team Teaching, the fluid grouping of students and in the development of innovative pedagogies. Innovation is the norm and learning and working collaboratively is one of our core beliefs.

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We make this belief visible when we do the following:

- By being committed to team-work and team-teaching
- By working collaboratively with our colleagues and mentoring and supporting our fellow teachers.
- Being committed to our own professional growth and setting ourselves challenging goals as part of the PDP process.
- By understanding that constant learning by teachers is fundamental to school improvement
- By supporting our colleagues and working as a team.
- By being open to feedback
- By adopting collective responsibility for the students within our teams.
- By modelling positive mindsets, positive behaviours
- By engaging rather than controlling students.
- By showing modelling pride in and commitment to our school.
- By maintaining an orderly, disciplined, respectful and engaging school environment.
- By engaging parents and the wider community in our learning program

At Avenel Primary School, we recognise that students are engaged in a wide variety of ways. We ensure that our students understand the values of our school and are explicitly taught the expected behaviours to promote a safe and positive learning environment. Our staff are driven to meet the individual learning needs of all students and provide constructive feedback to ensure each student can reach their full potential. An effective teacher at Avenel Primary School provides a safe, engaging and inclusive learning environment that caters for the individual needs of all students. We encourage students to investigate all aspects of learning which includes building thinking skills, reflection and applying the knowledge that is learnt. Acknowledging the learning outcomes and the achievements of our students is an important aspect of the learning process at Avenel Primary School.

Kids Matter Framework:

KidsMatter Primary is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children. KidsMatter Primary provides the proven methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced kids. At Avenel Primary School, our Kids Matter focuses on the following goals, targets and behaviours:

- Create a welcoming and friendly school environment where there is a sense of belonging and inclusion.
- Helping students to recognise and manage their emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships and handle challenging situations effectively.
- Supporting parents, carers and families to support their children's learning and mental health and wellbeing.
- Supporting children who are showing early signs of, or already experiencing mental health difficulties.

Behavioural expectations

Shared behaviour expectations for students, parents/carers and school staff are detailed at Appendix 1.

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School actions

Responding to challenging behaviour:

Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, we will institute a staged response, as outlined in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance (see Appendix 2).

Discipline

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

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

Restorative approach (eg repairing damage caused)

- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Expulsion

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

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

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

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

Bullying:

A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative and harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. Avenel Primary School aims to promote preventative, whole-school approaches to minimise concerns with student engagement, attendance and behaviour. The Avenel Primary School approach to bullying is fully elaborated in the Avenel Primary School Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT

Our understanding of disengagement: Disengagement is to mentally separate yourself, or to become uninvolved in a situation. Disengagement can be experienced at any stage of a person's life and is a result of real or perceived feelings of not belonging or not being connected to people or events. Disengagement occurs in both sexes but the more negative results have been recorded with young males. (Sizer, 1996).

SUSPENSION

Reasons for suspension Students can be suspended if, while at school, travelling to or from school or during an out-of-school activity (including travel there and back), they:

- (a) Threaten or constitute a danger to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person

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Comment [1]: Schools should also include process for how discipline will be applied for various breaches of behaviour expectations. See example at Appendix 5.



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(b) Commit an act of significant violence against a person or cause significant damage to or destruction of property; are knowingly involved in the theft of property.

- Possess, use, or deliberately assist another person to use prohibited drugs or substances
- Fail to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member
- Consistently interfere with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student
- Consistently vilify, defame, degrade or humiliate another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes.

EXPULSION REASONS FOR EXPULSION

- Students can be expelled if, while at school, travelling to or from school or during an out-of-school activity (including travel there and back), they:
- threaten or constitute a danger to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person
- commit an act of significant violence against a person or cause significant damage to or destruction of property; are knowingly involved in the theft of property
- possess, use, or deliberately assist another person to use prohibited drugs or substances
- fail to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member
- consistently interfere with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student
- consistently vilify, defame, degrade or humiliate another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes.
- The student's behaviour is of such magnitude that it is the only option left after balancing the need for the student's continued education against the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff.

A STAGED RESPONSE TO ATTENDANCE AT AVENEL PRIMARY SCHOOL PREVENTION

- Whole school strategies to promote attendance and punctuality
- Camps and excursion programs accessible to all students
- Regular newsletter articles on punctuality and the need to be at school • Documented procedures for absence
- Sign in procedures for late arrivals to school.

EARLY INTERVENTION- strategies for some students

- Leadership contact with parents
- Student Support plans with parents
- Behaviour Management plan established
- Early Childhood intervention service

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- Daily phone calls to families of chronically absent students INTERVENTION- strategies for a few students • Referral to outside agencies
- Meeting with parents
- Assistance to arrange transport to school

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