



# **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION POLICY**

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## **1. School Profile:**

Baxter Primary School enrolments are around 160 in 2017. The school is situated in an attractive rural setting located in the township of Baxter on the Western Port side of the Mornington Peninsula. Established in 1890, the school is proud of its long history and service to the community. It has changed sites 3 times and came to the current site on Grant Road in 1955. It still has the main 1930's school building incorporated into the current administration wing. A new BER four classroom complex was built in 2011. With extensive play areas, ovals and courts of both grass and asphalt, children have many choices of sport and play time activities.

Our aim is for children to grow and develop as unique and important individuals with a strong sense of self-worth, confidence and respect for other members of the community.

In our commitment to and use of Learning Technologies we maintain the latest in computer hardware with a leased network of over 65 computers; also we have a staged purchasing program of interactive white boards. All children have access to the latest programs, internet access and hardware. All teaching staff have notebook computers and regularly participate in PD to continue skill development.

Information collected at the school level indicates that there is an increasing trend of students enrolling with academic and welfare concerns. Parents are very impressed by our smaller school facilitating a more personalised educational program. Many of these enrolments have been placed on our "at risk" list and teachers and parents have negotiated "Individual Student Learning Plans."

This has also impacted on the provision of support services such as Guidance Officers, Speech Therapists school Chaplain and Social Worker.

Our school had a SFO index of 0.44. Very few children come from a background where English is not the main language spoken and approximately 33% of families currently receive the Educational Maintenance Allowance.

Our school is noted in particular for its Health & Physical Education and Outdoor Education camping programs. Visual and Performing Arts are recognised by the community as strengths. These include children's art displays and assembly performances and an annual production performed by our Year 3 & 4 children.

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

Our school is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Please see our Bullying Prevention Policy for more information.

Our philosophy:

*Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.*

Our vision:

*All students are confident, curious learners who feel supported and able to meet the challenges at school and beyond.*

Our values: *Diversity, achievement, responsibility and endeavour.*

A statement about the rights and responsibilities of all students and school staff is included at **Appendix 1.**

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### **3. Guiding Principles**

- The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behaviour management approach.
- The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change.
- The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

### **4. Engagement Strategies**

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

The School works collaboratively with students and parents/ carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

### **5. Identifying students in need of extra support**

Our school will utilise the School Entry Health Questionnaire to identify students in need of extra support using the following

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- Behaviour observed by classroom teachers
- Student Mapping Tool
- Engagement with student families

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## 6. Behavioural Expectations

We have shared behaviour expectations for students, parents/carers and school staff

## 7. 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.

### 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
- Detention
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Expulsion

**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.

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that our school will follow are available here:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/discipline.aspx>

## 8. Engaging with families

The School values parent / carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion Survey, and from parent representatives on School Council. The School Council also can provide financial assistance and encouragement to families in needy circumstances in our efforts to build a sense of community.

The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.

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The school will create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- involving families in Student Support Groups

Parent's responsibilities for supporting their child's attendance and engagement are outlined in DEECD policies. Furthermore, parents are expected to act in a respectful and constructive manner when dealing with our school.

## **9. Evaluation**

### **Data collection and analysis**

Data will be collected regarding frequency and types of wellbeing issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some of sources of data used are:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- school level report data
- parent survey data
- data from case management work with students
- data extracted from software such as CASES21 or SOCS

### **Review of this policy**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

## **10. Appendices and Related Policies**

Appendix 1: Statement of Rights and Responsibilities

This policy is informed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Student Engagement and inclusion Guidance available at

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx>

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## Appendix 1

### **STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the right of all members of the School community to experience a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment. Staff, students and parents/ carers have a right to be treated with respect, and enjoy an environment free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation. (Refer to our Bullying Prevention Policy and Equal Opportunity Policy).

Teachers also have the rights to be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student.

Students have a responsibility to contribute positively to the educational experience for themselves and other students, to participate fully in the school's educational program, and to ensure that their behaviours demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

Parents/ carers have a responsibility to take an active interest in their child's educational progress, model and reinforce positive behaviours and ensure their child's regular attendance. They have a responsibility to support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, and engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.

Teachers have a responsibility to demonstrate the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching. That is, to know how students learn and how to teach them effectively, know the content they teach, know their students, plan and assess for effective learning, create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments, and use a range of strategies to engage students in effective learning. Teachers also have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Student Engagement Policy.

All members have an obligation to ensure school property is appropriately used and maintained.

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