

## **Student Engagement Policy 2013 – to be reviewed annually and formally in 2016**

### **Purpose:**

The Toora Primary School Student Engagement policy supports the provision of a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment. It supports the school's capacity to respond to individual circumstances when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated. All decisions made at the school are in the best interest of the students.

### **Student engagement encompasses:**

**Behavioural engagement:** Students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.

**Emotional engagement:** Students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school; a sense of belonging / connectedness to the school.

**Cognitive engagement:** Students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

### **Background:**

Our student engagement policy hinges on a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of the whole-school community. Toora Primary School community consists of: students from varied home environments, for example, single parent families, long term and short term foster care, changing family structures, blended families, nuclear families; Students on the Disability and Impairment program; Students requiring support via the School Support Services network; Families of differing sizes; Families with both parents, one parent or neither parent working in paid employment; Families shifting in and out of the geographic area; A mix of rural and town families; Parent and community volunteer helpers; Families with personal support networks and those with little or no support; Mainly Anglo/Caucasian families and staff; Families with a mix of socio-economic backgrounds; Families with differing values; Families with differing religious/spiritual beliefs; Students experiencing puberty; Students with differing strengths and weaknesses across the curriculum.

### **Values:**

Toora Primary School values: effort and achievement; respect of self and others; high expectations of the school community; and, a positive attitude. Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program. We believe that all students are able to learn and achieve; home, school and community working together maximise learning; we learn best when we feel we belong and have a commitment to ongoing improvement. The school implements programs and strategies to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours. At Toora Primary School all students are valued and cared for, and are supported to feel part of the school, engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

### **Targets:**

**Attendance:** Full student attendance and participation, except where there is a legitimate reason for nonattendance and participation, for example illness, appointments.

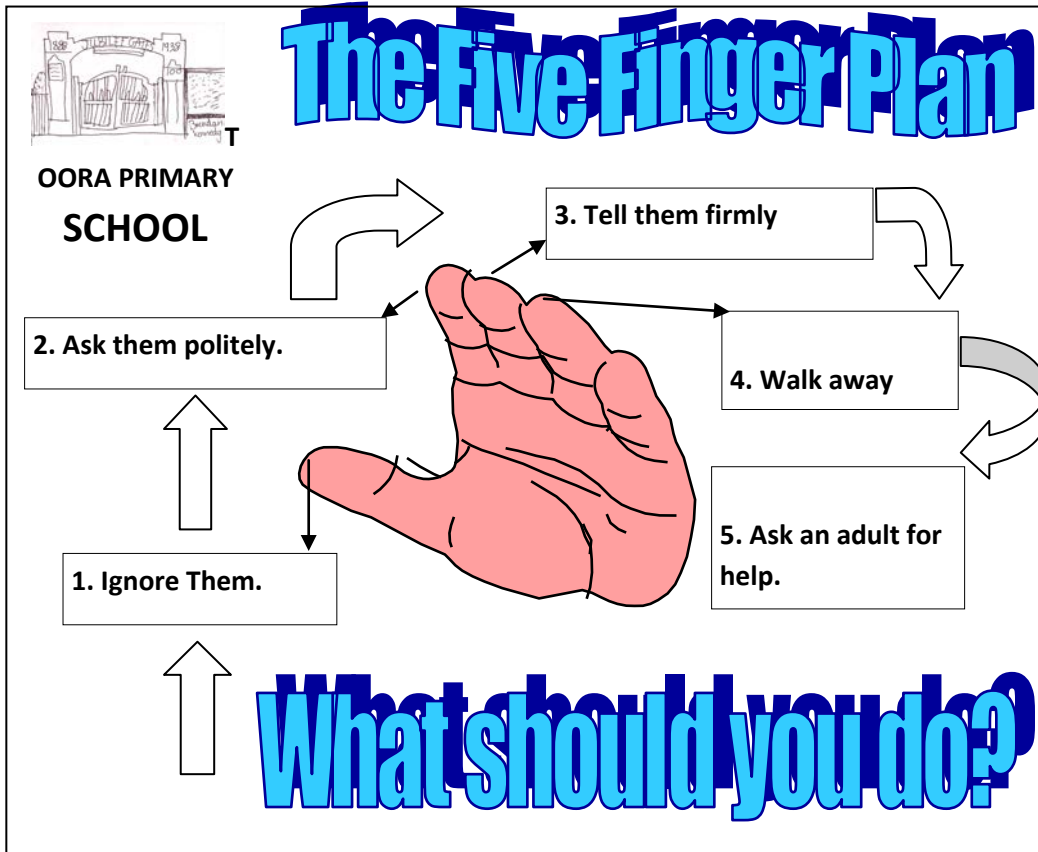
**Engagement:** whole school community with focus on bringing parent / community attitudes on board with staff / student (shown by improved data in annual surveys.)

**Positive Behaviours:** Improved relationships demonstrated by harmonious relationships and a decrease in the need for time out and the implementation of negative consequences; increase in acknowledgement and celebration of positive behaviours.

**Prevention and early intervention strategies:**

- Scaffolding the student's learning program
- Articulating high expectations of all students
- Rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
- Following up of student absences where concerns are present, needs to be prompt and consistent (Student Engagement Worker initially, if no improvement Principal and finally report to DEECD / DHS if necessary)
- Promote the It's Not Okay to Be Away initiative; certificate awarded each term, semester, year to students with high attendance
- Clearly written / verbal statements made regularly to parents/carers and students regarding school attendance expectations
- Promote family awareness that absence and late arrivals result in quantifiable lost learning time and opportunities
- Whole-school modelling of punctuality
- Regular discussions on student attendance in staff meetings and in the staff performance and development review process
- Seek and communicate causal factors of absence and the need for targeted intervention
- Collaborative and cooperative programs with other schools, community groups and agencies
- Provision of consistent school and classroom environments
- Clear understanding of expectations by students and staff
- Student Engagement Worker and Primary Welfare Officer provide supports for staff, families and students
- Lunchtime clubs
- Comprehensive curriculum matching student needs and interests (encompassing extra-curricular activities) and appreciating the diverse range of student abilities
- Explicit teaching of school values and required behaviours with an understanding of consequences
- Close supervision of student behaviours by yard duty teachers (including bus duty) during all breaks – before and after school, recess and lunch
- Maintaining small classes with a focus on transition between grades as well as between school and kindergarten and school and secondary college (for example, rotations, team teaching, learning walks, whole school activities)

- Relationship building between staff and students
- Relationship building between staff and families
- Communicate the message that we do care through our actions support students' personal and interpersonal development
- Sharing with parents the importance of homework and its aims and objectives (for example, home reading, Sound Waves word lists)
- Weekly staff meetings during which student wellbeing is discussed
- Explicit teaching of social skills through class sessions of You Can Do It! and Catching on Early
- Support from School Support Services, local community groups and agencies for staff, students and families including Social Skills programs, one-on-one counselling and therapy
- Professional Development for example "Calmer Classrooms" "Restorative Practises"
- School representation at student case meetings
- Student leadership opportunities, for example, Year 6 leadership positions
- Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision making
- Consistently acknowledging all students
- Provision of physical environments that are conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning (indoor and outdoor learning environments)
- Student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations / rules and consequences
- Special projects, for example Learning Stone Project; Whole school activities
- Students are taught conflict resolution skills and the 5 Finger Plan.



**Students at risk:**

- Students who are absent from school are at risk of missing out on fundamental aspects of their educational and social development - Organise attendance focused meetings with parents/carers and students; Individual student attendance goal setting and data driven improvement plans; Formal procedures for supporting the learning of a student absent for an extended period (classroom teacher to supply relevant learning materials).
- Students have different learning needs. Some may have specific learning delays / disabilities - Gather information regarding each student on school entry, inclusive of parent concerns, student strengths and weaknesses, student interests, developmental and medical history, kinder / school recommendations; Staff observations and assessments; Formal assessments undertaken by School Support Staff or other specialists; Seek additional funding to support student needs, for example, Program for Students with Disabilities, Uniting Care; Provision of personal learning programs - Individual Learning Plans / Individual Behaviour Plans are developed based on knowledge of the student and recommendations from specialists; Implementation of Individual Learning Plans and sharing with staff and family; Identifying the resources that will best meet the needs of the student, for example, counselling from Student Engagement Worker, specific learning aids (for example social stories, reading resources, computer equipment), Education Support Staff, reduced class size, teacher time plus tutoring by qualified teacher, private music lessons; Establish support groups for students as required.

**Data Collection:**

- School Accountability and Improvement Framework – Strategic Plan, Annual Implementation Plan, Student Attitude to School Survey, Parent and Staff Opinion Surveys
- Absence data
- Naplan, On-demand testing, class assessments, student June and December reports
- Use of the Ultranet to share student development, provide feedback, report to families
- Student feedback
- Pastoral Care records
- Parent feedback, for example, written comments on student reports / the Ultranet, focus groups, School Council
- Attendance of parents at Parent / Teacher interviews and special events that showcase student development, for example, Athletic Sports, Cross Country, Open Afternoons, School Assemblies, End of term / year celebrations
- Student outcomes in Personal and Inter-personal Learning.

## Rights and Responsibilities:

Every student has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. All students deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. It is unlawful to discriminate against gender, race, religion, political conviction, age or impairment. The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 demands equality for all and emphasises the value of difference. Schools must act compatibly with human rights and consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services. Implementation of the school's student engagement policy needs to be consistent, fair and reasonable.

Who	Rights	Responsibilities
Students	<p>To feel safe and valued.</p> <p>To be challenged and experience success in their learning.</p> <p>To contribute collaboratively and constructively with peers, family, school and the wider community.</p> <p>To be shown respect from their peers, teachers and all members of the school community.</p> <p>To increasingly develop their independence and ownership of their learning.</p>	<p>Increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.</p> <p>Participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly.</p> <p>Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all members of the school community.</p> <p>Abide by all rules including those pertaining to bullying and cyberbullying.</p>
Parents	<p>To have knowledge of the school curriculum, policies and operation.</p> <p>To be involved in school decision making via the established processes, for example, parent surveys, School Council, focus groups.</p> <p>To show and be shown respect by all members of the school community.</p>	<p>Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress.</p> <p>Assist children with their home work.</p> <p>Parental co-operation with the school, including regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning and wellbeing.</p> <p>Ensure regular student attendance.</p> <p>Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning</p>

		<p>environment for all students.</p> <p>Model positive behaviours.</p>
School Council	To be kept informed and contribute to all aspects of the running of the school.	<p>Engage in the development of the Student Engagement Policy.</p> <p>Approve the policy, monitor its effectiveness and evaluate its success.</p> <p>Maintain protocols inclusive of confidentiality.</p>
<p>Staff –</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Education Support Officers</p> <p>Student Engagement Worker</p> <p>Primary Welfare Officer</p>	<p>To be show and be shown respect from all members of the school community.</p> <p>To feel safe and valued in their role of supporting student learning; and to have their expertise acknowledged.</p> <p>To be trusted to make decisions in students' best interests.</p>	<p>Be aware of the role of other professionals and agencies and when students should be referred to them for assistance.</p> <p>Maintain a safe and challenging learning environment.</p> <p>Have high expectations of every student, recognising and developing each student's abilities, skills and talents.</p> <p>Consider all viewpoints fairly.</p> <p>Model and engage in respectful and impartial language.</p> <p>Enhance student autonomy and sense of self worth, and encourage students to develop and reflect on their own values.</p> <p>Respect different approaches to teaching.</p> <p>Respect student privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate.</p>

Actions and consequences need to be incremental (a staged response) and need to be applied fairly and consistently. Equal emphasis will be placed on issuing positive consequences for meeting high expectations as there will be on negative consequences. Actions and consequences should 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 should be avoided where possible. Students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience. 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. In these instances DEECD procedures for suspension / expulsion will be followed.

### **Hierarchy of Behaviours:**

Annually staff review hierarchy of behaviours and determine categories – minor, moderate and severe for consistent application of consequences.

### **Consequences:**

- Minor: Teacher intervention; acknowledge and quiet word. If behaviour repeated, move to the next category.
- Moderate: Dealt with at school for one offence. Students complete Behaviour Journal. Repeat moderate behaviours – parents informed.
- Severe: Students complete Behaviour Journal. Parents informed. Individual Behaviour Plan / Support Group as required.

Consequences need to be determined, the process kept simple, documented and shared with students and parents. Students have input into deciding fair and reasonable consequences to repair relationships, based on Restorative Practises and as directed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

### **Yard Duty teachers:**

- Rove and monitor hot spots, for example toilets
- Engage in positive conversations
- Supervise all students playing in different areas of the school
- Consistently apply consequences
- Use support pack of bandages, notebook for recording behaviours and passing on messages from one staff member to another
- Offer alternatives, for example, chalk
- Time out requires students to sit at a designated space for a specified time and consider choice options and what they could do better next time? Teachers will remain calm but firm. Teachers may need to spread students out if more than one child requires time out.