



Student Engagement **Policy**

1. School Profile Statement

Aspendale Gardens is a large primary school in the South Eastern Victorian Region with a current enrolment of 670 students. The school is located on spacious well maintained grounds with 29 classrooms along with two Art Rooms, Library, IT area, two Performing Arts rooms, a gymnasium with full sized basketball court, Friendship room, kitchen / Dining room, and LOTE (Mandarin) room. The school grounds are extensive and contain a safe junior and senior playground, enormous sand pit and large open playing field. There are also quiet areas scattered throughout the courtyard and surrounds.

The Before and After Care program has its own designated area and is run by Camp Australia. Our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program employs a Horticultural Specialist and a Food Technician, who educate our students on the value of growing, harvesting and cooking our own produce.

The multi-cultural nature of the school is a great asset, enriching the educational experiences of all students. The Student Family Occupation (SFO) density index is 0.32 which falls within the 75th to 95th percentiles.

Our staff are dedicated and committed to developing a learning environment which maximises the overall educational needs of our students. We encourage team planning and shared experiences across year levels. We have team leaders at each year level and leaders to lead pedagogy along with curriculum planning and development.

Teams take on the leadership of special events including our bi-annual carnival and whole school production, science fair and art expo. We regularly support charities and events to provide learning and understanding of our students' world and wider community. We also assist an orphanage in Cambodia with an Annual Silent Auction of the art work produced by the students at the orphanage. We enjoy a fabulous relationship with our sister school in Nanjing, China where students participate annually in an exchange program. We have just formed another sister school relationship with Yangzhou Yucai Primary School. Students, teachers and the wider community are enriched by these cultural experiences.

Aspendale Gardens participate in the Marine Ambassadors Program which engages the school community in Marine Education and Conservation. Our School Captain Naveen was recently awarded the title of Kingston Junior Mayor. The 27 schools in the Kingston LGA competed for this sought after title. As part of his role as Junior Mayor Naveen is required to attend functions in the Kingston Municipality.

Aspendale Gardens was one of the founders of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation' Better Buddies Program. The school follows the philosophy of the program in all areas of teaching. To enhance our Buddy Program we offer a Friendship Room, where students can attend during lunchtimes to play games and interact with others in a friendly and supportive environment.

Students are able to receive music tuition in the areas of singing, dance, violin, keyboard, guitar and drums. All students have the opportunity to participate in an intensive swimming program and a broad excursion/ incursion and school camping program. The Year 6 students attended Canberra for the first time this year. There are many and varied lunchtime activities including chess, junior dance, choir and robotics.

We have a very active parent community. Parents support the school through involvement in classroom programs, fundraising, sports activities, camps and excursions, kitchen/garden and numerous other activities.

The last 3 years has seen growth and development in literacy particularly with the introduction of the Daily 5 / CAFÉ program. Numeracy has also shown improvement due to the common approach being implemented across the school. Recording of assessment across all curriculum areas with the introduction of SPA, has enabled all staff to monitor and track individual or groups of students

In 2013, we introduced a Bring Your Own Device Program, being iPads in Years 4 - 6. The program has been extremely successful, and we hope to continue to grow our knowledge and skills in this area. The use of Interactive Whiteboards in all classrooms, iPads whenever possible and the IT area, allows us to access information quickly at all times. We have upgraded our ICT infrastructure which supports our ICT devices brilliantly. All classes are straight grades aligned with the Australian Curriculum. We will be embarking on the IB - PYP journey next year.

Student well-being is an important focus and all staff are trained in Restorative Practices. The school values Respect, Honesty, Empathy, Friendliness, Motivation and Resilience impact on everyday behaviour and are the foundation of the way we interact and behave. We offer Reading Recovery when required, a PALS (Providing Additional Literacy Support) program, Mathletes for the highly talented Maths students and a number of other support and extension programs.

Our aim is to provide a teaching and learning program of the highest quality. A positive approach to student management and the development of positive relationships within our school community are a critical part of our philosophy. The school environment is warm and friendly and a fabulous place to come to each day. We have high expectations of our students, both behaviourally and academically and promote moral purpose at all times within our community.

2. Whole School Prevention Statement

The ethos of the school is to encourage an enthusiasm for learning through effective teaching and learning practices. The school prides itself on providing a supportive learning environment which not only nurtures the individual, but also encourages respect for the “rights of all”. This ethos is built on the following values:

Our School community has developed the following six values as central to the life of our school

Respect

| This Means..... | Behaviours that demonstrate the value..... |
|--|---|
| Treating one another and the school environment with consideration and courtesy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active listening to a speaker in all situations without interruption • No putdowns • Open communication (open minded) • Being punctual • Acceptance of different personality types • Acceptance of different teaching styles • Allowing others to voice their opinion • Acknowledge efforts and accomplishments • Individual views are considered in decision making processes • Conscious of personal workspaces • Accept constructive feedback • Carry out commitments • Use positive body language |

Honesty

| This Means..... | Behaviours that demonstrate the value..... |
|--|--|
| Communicating truthfully and in a tactful manner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking truthfully with one another • Be willing to answer questions and raise them • Be willing to express your opinion. • Responding appropriately to questions • Expressing feelings sensitively • Reflecting on own and others performance honestly • Recognising own abilities and limitations and areas for development |

Motivation

| This Means..... | Behaviours that demonstrate the value..... |
|--|---|
| To be stimulated, engaged and excited about a task. To perform at an optimum level. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working cooperatively as a team • Being happy and positive • Being organised and prepared • Setting achievable goals • Displaying interest in own and others tasks and activities • Providing constructive and objective feedback • Challenge oneself • Preparedness to revisit/reassess goals and targets • Acknowledge and support efforts of others • Acknowledge that others may have different levels of motivation |

Friendliness

| This Means..... | Behaviours that demonstrate the value..... |
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| Creating a positive environment that allows everyone to feel comfortable, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet people in a positive manner • Smile • Use positive body language • Exude warmth • Celebrate each others highs • Warmly acknowledge and welcome visitors |

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| accepted and cared for. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer telephone in a warm and welcoming manner • Acknowledge cultural diversity |
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Empathy

| This Means..... | Behaviours that demonstrate the value..... |
|--|--|
| Demonstrating understanding, compassion and support in a sincere manner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking people if they are OK • Showing patience • Active listening • Understanding individual needs – we are all different • Providing support to others during stressful times or times of need • Being sensitive to needs |

Resilience

| This Means..... | Behaviours that demonstrate the value..... |
|--|---|
| Demonstrating a secure sense of one's identity, self-worth and ability to cope with stress and adversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to bounce back after a setback • Having strong personal goals and values • Having a sense of humour • Showing initiative and problem solving skills • Being able to stand up for yourself • Showing independence • Never giving up |

Prevention Programs

Classroom Agreements

At Aspendale Gardens the word rules does not exist. We do not have rules, we have values. Each teacher is required to develop a classroom management plan centred around the six School Values. The plan is developed in consultation with the students and submitted to the Assistant Principals. The management plan consists of a classroom agreement and consequences.

When the management plan is approved, it is sent home to parents to be signed and returned to school. Management plans should be finalised by the middle of February. **Classroom Agreements and Consequences should be displayed prominently in each classroom and specialist area.**

Yard Agreements

The Student Council, supported by staff, is responsible for framing the playground agreement. The school has developed a flow chart of the processes required when students break the Yard Agreement. Yard Agreements are clearly on display around the school affirming the correct way to behave and treat each other.

Whole School Buddy Program

Aspendale Gardens' whole school buddy program is based on the Alannah and Madeline Foundation model. Aspendale Gardens has been a pilot school for this program for a number of years. Every child within the school has a buddy. The buddy program is timetabled fortnightly enabling buddy classes to meet and work on the six aforementioned school values. A range of activities are conducted to reinforce the values and their meaning across the school.

Friendship Seat

Friendship seat is situated in the courtyard and is to support students who are lonely or upset. They can go to the seat and wait for another student or teacher to support them.

Buddy High 5's

Students can receive a Buddy High 5 in the yard or classroom. When a child is demonstrating a school value they can be given a Buddy high 5 by a teacher or by a Student Leader. During the course of a week the Buddy high 5's are placed on a grade chart. On Friday each week one child from each level is selected as the Buddy high 5 winner for that level. Photos are prominently displayed in the school library window.

Fast Feet Friday

Sports leaders run this program each Friday at lunch time. Students are encouraged to run laps around a prescribed course and are acknowledged when they reach certain levels.

School environment

A number of different strategies have been implemented to create a safe school environment. These include

- A two metre perimeter fence around the school
- Any child leaving a classroom during teaching time is to be accompanied by another student.
- Visitors pass
- Early leavers and late pass
- Yard duty teachers wear fluoro vests for easy recognition
- Yard phone system

Attendance

So that students maximise their educational opportunities at Aspendale Gardens Primary, regular, consistent attendance is essential.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school on days of absence by phone. Attendance is recorded daily on CASES 21. If no response is received after three consecutive days absence Office Staff will contact parents for a reason for absence. Monthly checks of attendance are conducted initially by an office staff member, followed by an Assistant Principal. Any family with a child with an unexplained absence or late start on more than three occasions a month will receive a letter from the Assistant Principal. If continued over two months a phone call is made to a parent.

If a family is planning an extended holiday a prior letter of intent is required.

In the case of ongoing or frequent absenteeism, a meeting which could include Class Teacher, Year Co-ordinator, Welfare Officer, Assistant Principals, Principal, student and parents/guardians will be arranged. Means to support the student to attend school will also be examined. Parental support in these matters is vital to ensure the best possible educational opportunities for our students.

Late Arrivals

All students who are late to school must get a late pass from the School Office. Late arrivals are checked monthly by an Assistant Principal. Repeated lateness results in a letter to parents and if required a meeting to establish positive strategies for improvement.

Additional Needs

A school psychologist is available to students, families and staff needing additional support with wellbeing issues that may arise.

External specialists such as Speech Pathologists, Guidance Officers, Visiting Teachers Service, and more are available through Southern Region on a school referral basis.

The school employs an outside Speech Therapist one day a week to support children in need of language assistance. A number of external paraprofessionals work within the school to support private patients.

Lunchtime Activities

A range of supervised activities are conducted during the lunch hour to provide an alternative for students and promote wellbeing. Staff are able to nominate an area of interest that they will supervise in lieu of yard duty. In the past areas have included

- Library supervision
- Chess Club
- School Band
- Dance
- Badminton
- Outside game
- Art /Craft activities
- Environmental area
- Friendship room

Our strategic goal of promoting high levels of student engagement, self esteem and wellbeing is supported by the Leadership Team which actively promotes current initiatives in good teaching and learning practices and student wellbeing programs. This ensures that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students by responding to their diverse learning needs. Evidence of this occurring at Aspendale Gardens Primary School is reflected in our effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and the respectful relationships that are developed between staff and students.

3. Rights and Responsibilities

- Students' behaviour contributes to the educational, social, emotional and physical development of themselves and those around them.
- Actively teaching students whole school engagement, attendance and behavioural expectations creates a highly predictable environment that allows students to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from each other.
- There will be specific responsibilities for principals, teachers and wellbeing staff to ensure that students and parents/carers have a clear understanding of what can be expected from the school.

| Rights | Responsibilities |
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| Students have a right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition• participate fully in the school's educational program | Students have a responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.• As students progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.• Students should, with support, be expected to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. |

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

| Rights | Responsibilities |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged | Parents/carers have a responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours.• Ensure their child's regular attendance• Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.• Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. |

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

| Rights | Responsibilities |
|---------------|-------------------------|
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| <p>Teachers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • Be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student | <p>Teachers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. • 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. • Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning. |
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4. Shared Expectations

- Aspendale Gardens Primary School has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected.
- The expectations are intended to be positive in that they set out expected and appropriate behaviours for our school community; including the principal, teachers and school staff, students and parents/carers.
- Shared expectations are not only around behaviour and attendance, but around participation, resources, relationship building, the physical environment, curriculum, provisions of support and partnerships.

The school's values are the core of The Student Wellbeing Program

Respect - Treating one another and the school environment with consideration and courtesy.

Honesty - Communicating truthfully and in a tactful manner

Motivation - To be stimulated, engaged and excited about a task. To perform at an optimum level.

Friendliness - Creating a positive environment that allows everyone to feel comfortable, accepted and cared for.

Empathy - Demonstrating understanding, compassion and support in a sincere manner.

Resilience - To be able to adapt and overcome adversity.

School expectations include:

- inclusive teaching practices
- accessible educational provision for all students
- parent/carers partnerships and liaison
- community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- provision of appropriate student services
- development and provision of an appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

Restorative Practices

- The school is committed to the use of Restorative Practices with students. All teaching staff are trained in Restorative Practices and processes are regularly revisited. These practices are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships where each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied.

Diversity in the school community

Aspendale Gardens Primary School aims to address diversity by:

- maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
- attracting and supporting highly skilled and diverse staff
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity of work teams enabling effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs

Expectations of *students* include:

- positive participation
- being proactive in asking for help / asking questions
- treating classmates / teachers with respect and dignity
- valuing school resources
- supporting classmates / teachers
- attending regularly

Expectations of *teachers* include:

- creating an engaging lesson
- providing enjoyable classrooms
- making sure every student has an equal opportunity to participate
- asking for student input into the curriculum and class environment
- listening to students and valuing their contributions
- listening to parents insights into their children's learning
- providing a wide range of resources to engage students
- understanding the needs of students and accommodate those needs

Expectations of *Principal Class Officers* include:

- providing leadership, not only to school staff but to students as well
- ensuring staff, students and the wider school community understand their expectations
- staff and students having the resources and equipment to assist them in the process of teaching and learning
- establishing an inclusive curriculum that takes into account the needs of specific students where practicable (such as students with disabilities, ESL)
- encouraging the participation of parents

Expectations of *student wellbeing and support staff*:

- timely accessibility and availability
- non – judgmental attitudes
- trust and confidentiality
- understanding and caring

Expectations of *parents / carers*:

- support their children's education
- cooperate with requests from the school
- promote positive educational outcomes for their children

- ensure their children are attending school
- communicate clearly with the school about the needs of their children

5. School Actions and Consequences

Aspendale Gardens Primary School's actions and consequences section of the School Engagement Policy is framed in a positive way to encourage students to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- consistently acknowledging all students
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- understanding the student's background and needs
- ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- scaffolding the student's learning program.

Broader support strategies will include:

- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- involving the student wellbeing coordinator, team leader, School Psychologist etc
- tutoring/peer tutoring
- mentoring and/or counselling
- convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, work education, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving community support agencies.

Aspendale Gardens Primary School will implement a Staged Response checklist as shown below for students who exhibit ongoing Behaviour:

Stage 1: Prevention and early intervention – Creating a positive school culture

School Actions

- Define and teach school-wide expectations for all.
- Establish relevant school-wide prevention programs.
- Establish consistent school-wide processes to identify students at risk of disengagement from learning.
- Establish consistent school-wide processes and programs for early intervention.

Stage 2: Intervention: a targeted response for individual students

School Actions

- Establish an understanding of the life circumstances of the child/young person and how they feel.
- Establish data collection strategies.
- Develop the plan for improvement based on data and review regularly.
- Explicitly teach and/or build replacement behaviours.
- Determine strategies for the monitoring and measurement of student progress.
- Establish inclusive and consistent classroom strategies.
- Establish out-of-class support strategies.
- Establish a student support group.

Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

(The following procedures are only to be implemented by the Principal of the school)

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in **Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines**. Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures.

A student may 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.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.

Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.
- Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.
- The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.
- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

References

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

