

Regency Park Primary School



Student Engagement, Inclusion & Well-Being Policy

**Produced in consultation
with the school community**

**To be read in conjunction with
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools
*Student Engagement Policy Guidelines***

**Current Principal: Carolyn Drinkwater
Current School Council President: Andrew Foskett**

1. School Profile Statement

Regency Park Primary School prides itself on its pursuit of excellence in all areas of the curriculum. Parents generally have high expectations of their children and of the school. The school council and PTFA are both very supportive of the school, staff and school programs, staff PD and new school initiatives. Several council subcommittees operate with membership comprising councillors as well as staff members.

Regency Park has an experienced professional staff who work closely together to ensure the educational and welfare needs of all students are met. The school year begins with 'Start Right at Regency' with a weekly program aimed at setting up rules, inclusivity and engaging activities. The development of a core set of values and the implementation of 'Play Is The Way' has led to a consistent and supportive environment in which students are developing social and emotional transitioning. Kids Matter is a framework that promotes students', parents' and staff mental health and well-being and is being introduced over the next few years.

The school provides excellent facilities which include an art and craft room, LOTE (Spanish) room, general purpose room, library and three separate playground areas. All playground equipment has been covered with expansive shade covers.

The school is organised into teaching teams. We are currently transitioning our curriculum planning documents from AusVELS to the Victorian Curriculum. Specialist programs operate in Physical Education, Visual Arts and Performing Arts and LOTE (Spanish). Intervention programs include Reading Recovery, English as a Second Language (EAL), Quicksmart, Bridges and EMU. Programs to extend and enrich students are also offered throughout the school.

Opportunities are provided for students to develop leadership skills through a number of programs such as: Peer support, Peer Mediation, Junior School Council, School Captains, House Captains, Choir and Performing Arts Captains. A number of traditions contribute to a stable yearly routine. These serve the community and the students by promoting enthusiasm and parental involvement at a variety of levels. Some examples of these popular events are the Community Evening, Year 1/2 Play, Education Week activities, Spanish Day, Wakakarri, Productions, End of Year Celebration and Year 6 Graduation.

Regency Park Primary School provides the school community with an educational facility implementing challenging programs delivered by dedicated staff, enjoyed by enthusiastic students and supported by parents in striving for excellence in learning and achievement.

2. Prevention Statement

The foundation of Regency Park's positive school culture is an emphasis on developing open, honest relationships with all members of the school community. Their active participation is encouraged to ensure they feel valued, safe and secure and are provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school. Students have many opportunities to meet their personal and educational potential. A key component of Regency Park's approach to prevention is teaching explicit positive behaviours and understandings and using logical consequences to address appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

The 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 Student Representative Council and the formulation of classroom protocols, while parents are able to contribute to educational decision making through committees including school council. 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 opportunities for our students to take on meaningful responsibilities both within the school and the broader community.

Regency Park's positive school culture is also predicated on student engagement, inclusion and wellbeing as the foundation for learning. The school leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse learning needs. Effective differentiated teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff and students is promoted through professional learning teams at a grade level, specialist area and with curriculum based teams.

The following core values underpin the programs and policies of Regency Park Primary School: Currently, in 2016:

VALUE	THIS IS DEMONSTRATED BY:
HONESTY	Being truthful in our intentions and actions.
RESPECT	Showing acceptance and consideration towards ourselves, others and our environment.
RESILIENCE	Bouncing back from challenges faced.
RESPONSIBILITY	Being accountable for your own actions, including any consequences.

Programs and strategies being implemented to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours

Regency Park Primary School focuses on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success. When engagement and wellbeing strategies are incorporated into the school ethos and curriculum, students will be more likely to attend school and participate in a meaningful way. These programs and strategies will be implemented through:-

- Encouraging a positive student environment in which students feel safe and supported and where their teachers have high expectations for their learning.
- The creation of fair, respectful and consistent behavior management systems which ultimately promote acceptance and respect for all individuals.
- A strong and sequential transition program and practices at the different levels throughout the school, creates expectation and reduces anxiety whilst developing resilience and readiness.
- The provision of a learning environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning, thus ensuring that the unique experiences and skills of the students' families and the community are enriched.
- The deployment of early intervention strategies will enable the early identification of vulnerable students and those at risk of disengagement from school, with particular focus on school attendance.
- Accessing specialized school personnel including guidance officer, speech pathologist, chaplain and visiting teachers.
- Providing student leadership opportunities such as Peer Mediation, Peer Support, Buddy Program, Kinder/Prep Transition and House Captains.
- Providing a host of school opportunities for students to engage in including choirs, performing arts programs, academic competitions, camps, sporting pursuits and ISSE.
- Ensuring that the parent/carer community assists the school with understanding of the need for wearing of uniforms, punctuality, the Year 6 Special Jacket, consistent attendance and involvement in all school activities.

3. Rights and Responsibilities

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, socio-economic status or their age.

3.3 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.

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect each other.

All DET 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 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 a disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a 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 and their outcomes
- Any recommended or alternative adjustments.

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.

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 a friend is harassing another person, they should 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)

They 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)

They 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.

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 used and the things said
- How others are treated
- Respecting people's property (eg copyright)
- Visiting appropriate places.

Behaving safely online means:

- Protecting your own privacy and personal information

- 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 this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher.

4. Shared Expectations

Characteristics of shared expectations in effective schools.

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole school community. Shared expectations are:

- Jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students
- Clear and specific
- Focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
- Focused on prevention and early intervention
- Supported by relevant procedures
- Consistent, fair and reasonable
- Linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

Regency Park has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

Regency Park's expectations will include statements that reflect:

- The school's values
- Inclusive teaching practices
- Accessible educational provision for all students
- Parent/carers partnerships
- Community partnerships
- The provision of appropriate student services
- The development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

Students

As students progress through Regency Park, they need to 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 by their parents/carers and their school to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

Demonstration of respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. Students' engagement, attendance and behavioural expectations should be framed using positive language to support and encourage safe and inclusive behaviour.

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.

Proactive preventative bullying and cyber bullying programs are a constant focus for the students at Regency Park Primary School.

Parents/carers

Parents are expected to promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress.

- Regular and constructive communication with the school staff regarding their child's learning and wellbeing, will actively support their child's engagement in the school environment.
- Parents will expect the school to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.
- Parents are encouraged to assist the school in its endeavours to ensure regular attendance, modelling positive behaviours and assisting their children with their school work.

5. Community Voice

We value and actively seek community input. Community consultation provides alternative views, broadens perspectives and enhances the school's ability to cater for the needs of all of its students.

Our school will strongly promote and support our School Council, the PTFA and other community groups and committees. The community will be consulted on all appropriate topics, using processes that are timely, transparent and that maximise input. Consultation will focus on the community groups most affected by the potential outcome. Consultation will be inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Generally the community will be consulted on policymaking, school direction and planning, the formation of goals and priorities, curriculum choices and the processes such as the reporting of student progress and community learning opportunities. The community will be informed that consultation does not mean decision-making. Nor does it equate that decision-making will simply be based on popularity of ideas or weight of numbers.

Consultation tools may include surveys, questionnaires, meetings or open forums. Information gleaned from community consultations will be openly distributed. All decisions made after community consultation will be openly communicated, as will the reasoning supporting such decisions.

Students can have their voice heard through class discussions with teachers and students and the Student Representative Council which meets on a regular basis.

6. Procedures for Raising a Concern or a Complaint

There are a number of ways parents can raise any concerns about their child and their education. They can:

1. Contact the child's teacher

- write a note to the child's teacher outlining the concerns
- make an appointment to speak on the phone or in person with the class teacher or the year level coordinator; ensuring that they inform the school about the issue they wish to discuss
- consider speaking with the school's student welfare coordinator or chaplain if parents feel that this would be appropriate
- arrange any meeting times or phone calls through the school office

The class teacher or year level coordinator, together with any others who may be involved, should be given a reasonable amount of time to take the steps required to resolve or address the concerns. It may not always be possible to resolve an issue to the complete satisfaction.

2. Contact the Principal or Assistant Principal

Most concerns are resolved by following the first two steps above. However, if the issue remains unresolved after the parent has approached the child's teacher or other school staff they can then ask to see the Principal or Assistant Principal. If the concern is related to issues of school policy, these should be raised more formally (in writing) with the principal or the school council.

3. Contact the Regional Office

If they still feel that the complaint has not been addressed satisfactorily after speaking to the teacher and the Principal, they can then contact the North Eastern Victoria Region nevr@edumail.vic.gov.au. A regional community liaison officer will be able to provide them with advice and assistance and, if required, direct the complaint to other regional staff to respond.

The Regional Director will ensure any formal written complaint is reviewed. It is the regional office's responsibility to:

- ensure that complaints, wherever possible, are resolved at the school
- ensure that procedures at the school are in accordance with the Department's regulatory framework.

The regional office may refer the complaint to other areas or branches within the Department.

4. Contact External Agencies

Parents may submit the complaint to an external agency if they feel that the issue has not been dealt with appropriately by the Department. Other agencies may include:

- [Victorian Ombudsman](#)
- [Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#)

Parents can also seek advice and/or mediation services from an organisation such as:

- [Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria](#)
- [Parents Victoria](#)

Behaviour Management

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours are supported most effectively through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices by:

- 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
- 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
- Implementing school-wide positive and educative behaviour support strategies.

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, can be responded to through a staged response that has a prevention and early intervention focus, including:

- Understanding the student
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Enforcing rules consistently throughout the school
- Scaffolding the student's learning program.

Broader support strategies include:

- Involving and supporting the parents/carers
- Involving the student wellbeing coordinator, guidance officer or speech pathologist
- 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
- Involving community support agencies.

Discipline procedures – classroom misdemeanours

- Each classroom has a graded set of consequences for unacceptable class behavior. Continued unacceptable behavior may result in the student being removed from the classroom to the Assistant Principal's Office with work to be completed for an appropriate time
- Serious class incidents such as verbal or physical abuse will result in immediate removal from the classroom to the Assistant Principal's Office. Time-out routines will be invoked and an incident report filled out and sent home to be signed by parents and returned
- Serious incidents will be investigated by the Principal or Assistant Principal in conjunction with classroom teachers with appropriate consequences implemented
- Parents will be contacted to discuss the related issues.
- **Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used under any circumstances.**

Discipline procedures – yard misdemeanours

- Yard duty teacher investigates and if a minor problem it is handled at that time
- Time Out is given for a serious yard problem and is conducted for 30 minutes during lunch recess and, if appropriate, morning recess in the Assistant Principal's office.
- All misdemeanours are recorded in the yard duty folder and if a student's name appears three times in a term, the Assistant Principal will meet with the student to discuss his/her behaviour.
- Students involved in major incidents will have an incident report filled out by the Assistant Principal. It is sent home to be signed by parents and returned. Parents are also contacted by phone prior to the incident report being sent home.

Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

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. Depending on the incident an internal suspension may be utilised.

Students have to accept responsibility for their actions and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience. Exclusions will only occur when all other options have been exhausted or where the wellbeing or safety of another student or teacher is at risk.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- 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. The 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 under the supervision of another teacher or the Assistant Principal.
- Where appropriate, informing parents/carers 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.

References

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/eo/eoact.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
Policy Requirements and Development	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/policydev.aspx
Detention Policy	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/detention.aspx
Suspension Policy	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/suspensions.aspx
Expulsion Policy	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/expulsions.aspx

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with DET regulations.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 14 th November 2016
