



DANDENONG SOUTH PS

Student Engagement Policy

DANDENONG SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

Dandenong South Primary School is located in the south eastern region of Melbourne approximately forty kilometres from the metropolitan city centre. The school location itself is bordered by residential, commercial and industrial zones.

The school has a current enrolment at census day 2016 of 626 students, with predicted increased enrolments for 2017 and beyond. Although approximately 88% of students have origins outside of Australia and speak 36 different languages, most are born here with family members having attended schools in the local community for several generations. The number of enrolments of students originating from Afghanistan (most of who are of a refugee background) has however recently increased to around 25% of the total school population, adding to our diverse multicultural profile.

A kindergarten (in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong), a new gymnasium, a new learning centre refurbished classrooms and an ongoing landscaping strategy have all continued to contribute to a learning environment of which the whole community is proud.

The school has a current enrolment at Census day 2016 of 626 students. This enrolment demonstrates a trend towards an increase in enrolments over the last four years. Although 88% of students have origins outside of Australia and speak approximately thirty-three different languages, most are born in Australia with family members having attended schools in the local community for several generations. The number of enrolments of refugees originating from Afghanistan has however recently increased, adding to the diverse multicultural profile of the school. Many of these children have had little or no previous schooling before enrolling at Dandenong South Primary School; and few of these families take up the option of enrolling their children in an English Language School.

In 2016, Dandenong South Primary School has a Student Family Occupation (SFO) density of 0.7035 with the state mean being 0.52. The school enrolment consists largely of children from families of low socio-economic status and of a language background other than English. Some 90% of year six students annually transition to the local government schools for their secondary education.

At Dandenong South Primary School Literacy and Numeracy are the core curriculum areas with students being provided with personalised learning opportunities as part of their regular classroom program. To meet the needs of our students who predominantly speak English as an additional language, the school has also prioritised the provision of a suite of Literacy intervention programs including a first phase EAL / Refugee Bridging program, LEAP (Literacy Enhancement Assessment Program) oral language, phonological awareness, reading and writing programs, and reading intervention programs.

In addition, the school ensures that a Restorative Practices approach provides a focus for developing positive relationships within the classroom, within the school and between the school and the community; with opportunities being provided for students to take responsibility for their behaviour and their learning.

Dandenong South Primary School has an outstanding teaching staff consisting of a blend of younger and more experienced professionals who demonstrate significant initiative and commitment to their students. There is a reasonably low annual rate of staff turnover which enables longer term planning and fosters school commitment and a shared sense of values; and as such we are well on the way to establishing a culture of collaboration and challenge.

Parents are vital partners in the educational process and in recent times, there has been a noticeable shift in parental involvement. There have been a variety of forums and an overwhelming number of parents have engaged in conversations about the future directions of the school. The swimming program, Foundation Information forums, excursions and special events, together with parent/teacher interviews also promote parent partnerships.

DANDENONG SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT

PREVENTATIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

Dandenong South Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. We have a zero tolerance for child abuse.

Dandenong South Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where all children are safe and feel safe. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Dandenong South Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

The positive school culture at Dandenong South Primary School encompasses a whole school approach which aims to support all members of the school community. Consultation with students, parents and Departmental support organisations, ensure that the school is responsive to student's social, emotional, cognitive and cultural needs. A key component of the Dandenong South Primary School's approach to prevention is to teach and acknowledge positive behaviours.

In addition, the school ensures that a Restorative Practices approach provides a focus for developing positive relationships within the classroom, within the school and between the school and the community; with opportunities being provided for students to take responsibility for their behaviour and their learning.

Along with a Restorative Practices approach, relationships are also complimented by social and emotional literacy/resilience classroom programs ('Bounce Back'). The implementation of programs such as lunchtime clubs, student leadership opportunities and a variety of social skills workshops (small group and one-on-one targeted social and emotional literacy programs) must be celebrated with all aiming to foster a greater feeling of connectedness - connectedness to self, peers, teachers and school - and to develop more positive attitudes and behaviours. There is also a focus on ensuring high quality instructional practices, personalised learning, close monitoring and tracking, individual case management /individual learning improvement plans, social and emotional/resilience programs, late to school strategies, absence protocols, screening and referral processes.

The positive culture of the school is also predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this, the leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that the curriculum engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse learning needs. Effective teaching, rigorous curriculum and the development of respectful relationships between staff and students are promoted through professional learning teams, action research projects and coaching.

The students at Dandenong South Primary School are also involved in decision making processes by the formulation of classroom protocols, participating in class meetings, addressing issues in community circles and participating in Junior School Council meetings. Students have opportunities to monitor their own learning through self-assessment, which provides them with ownership and allows them to feel safe to take educational risks in the environment that they have helped to create. The school continues to build on opportunities for students to take on meaningful responsibilities and leadership responsibilities in each sub-school.

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

ATTENDANCE

Student absence and lateness is an ongoing concern for the school. It is recognised that the school's attendance data is affected by cultural practice, prolonged trips overseas and the social values relating to the purpose and significance of education in primary school. Sub School Leaders regularly follow up on student absences and liaise with the school's Welfare Officer to provide support for students who are at-risk from disengaging from school. This support usually includes making links with support services both within and external to the school and developing productive family-school-agency partnerships. To encourage all students to arrive at school on time and to have a healthy start to the learning day, a Breakfast Club was introduced in 2008. On average, thirty students attend the Breakfast Club on a daily basis. Students are given the opportunity to make breakfast and lunch for themselves, while developing relationships with other students from across the school.

INTENSIVE LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Literacy and Numeracy are the school's core curriculum areas. A specific focus on reading comprehension has been identified and intervention programs are offered at each year level. Support programs are also available for students who are identified as being at risk in Literacy. The LEAP program provides targeted intervention to support student development in the areas of oral language and phonological awareness. The provision of strategically targeted intervention in Literacy is consistent across the school and out posting and second phase EAL programs are offered to students from a non-English speaking background. To improve student learning outcomes and to engage students in the curriculum; explicit teaching, ongoing assessment and an authentic approach to learning is implemented.

STUDENT WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE

A whole school approach towards student welfare and discipline is implemented at Dandenong South Primary School. The focus of this approach is to teach and acknowledge positive behaviours. The most profound learning occurs when there is a healthy relationship between teacher and student and parents. Restorative Practices assists in building capacity to enable students to self-regulate behaviour and

contributes to the improvement of learning outcomes. This approach allows students to build resilience and develop problem solving skills which can be applied to real life situations.

STUDENT WELLBEING

Lunch time activities, electives and multi-aged programs are implemented across the school to enhance the behavioural and emotional engagement of the students. By participating in these programs, students are able to improve their interpersonal skills through teamwork and co-operation.

These programs include:

- Social skills workshops run by the school's Wellbeing Officer
- Lunchtime sport competitions
- Book Week, Literacy/ Numeracy Week and special events activities
- Lunchtime activities such as dance, art, gardening club, etc.

STUDENT PATHWAYS AND TRANSITION

Dandenong South Primary School aims to provide a smooth and efficient transition from pre-school to primary school and from primary school to secondary school. The formal Foundation Orientation Program provides opportunities for the local kindergarten students and their families to become familiar with the school environment, teaching staff and simple school routines.

The key internal transition phase from Year Five to Year Six is addressed by the provision of information evenings for the Year Five students and their families. Topics such as homework, leadership roles and behaviour are clarified and high expectations are articulated which set the scene for Year Six. To ensure that students are prepared for secondary school, they also attend orientation sessions at the local secondary school throughout the year. The school releases relevant staff to visit the local kindergartens and liaise with the secondary schools transition co-ordinators to obtain and share essential information about individual student's needs.

The school personalises transition programs for Refugee students, students who are on the Program for Students with Disabilities and Koorie students.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional learning is given high priority at Dandenong South Primary School to ensure the strategies and approaches that are adopted by the whole school are implemented with integrity. There is a strong tradition in the school of assisting teachers to develop and maintain high professional standards. All teachers participate in the school's coaching program. This allows for rigorous conversations to identify strengths and weaknesses for improvement.

Significant funding and time (including one whole school curriculum day per year over three years) was allocated to Restorative Practices training for all staff over the four years. As mentioned previously, new staff were targeted for attendance at professional development sessions with the same consultant, Marg Armstrong, and staff who were having the most difficulty with implementation were targeted for additional /ongoing "refresher" courses. The school's Welfare Officer provides professional development workshops for all new staff focusing on the theory and implementation of Restorative Practices.

SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Dandenong South Primary School advocates the active involvement of parents in the learning and behaviour of each student. The school encourages this co-operative approach with parents through introductory interviews in Term One, parent-teacher interviews in Term Two, phone calls, and the use of student diaries in the Senior Sub-School. The school teaches and acknowledges positive student behaviours, however when this is compromised, logical and consistent consequences are implemented in a staged response. This approach is conducted in an informal way for minor incidents and is embedded in classroom teaching and learning. Serious incidents require more formal actions. This usually involves the Sub-School Leader/Assistant Principals/Principal/Wellbeing Officer and parents. Documentation of these incidents is required. In the case of repeated inappropriate behaviour, the school will devise strategies and approaches to address the needs of individual students. This may include in-school suspensions, referrals to the school's Wellbeing Officer or intervention from specialist services and external agencies.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 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 Governments schools and their employees to act compatibly with human rights and to consider them when making decisions and delivering services.

All members of the school community have a right to feel safe and supported at Dandenong South Primary School. It is the shared responsibility of the students, teachers and parents to maintain an inclusive and positive learning environment which focuses on student engagement and improved learning outcomes. To achieve this, the consistent application of the following rights and responsibilities are maintained across the school community.

(Refer to http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/ for The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006)

ALL MEMBERS OF THE DANDENONG SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMUNITY HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Fully participate in an environment free of discriminatory behaviour
- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Feel valued, safe and supported in an environment that is inclusive
- Acknowledge their obligations under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and communicate these obligations to all members of the school community
- Participate and contribute to a learning environment that is safe, secure and stimulating
- Ensure that their actions and views do not impact on the health and wellbeing of other members of the school community

Refer to <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Equal-Opportunity-Discrimination-and-Harassment.pdf> for the Equal Opportunity Act 2010.

All students have the right to:	All staff have the right to:	All parents have the right to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safe and secure at school • Be treated with respect • Learn in a safe and caring environment • Be supported and encouraged by teachers • Learn and play games without being interrupted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in a safe and supportive school • Be treated with respect • Be supported by the school community • Be treated equally and fairly • Participate in the decision making processes of the school • Be supported by the leadership team • Receive feedback about performance • Professional development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that their children are in a safe and caring learning environment • Know that the individual learning needs of their children are being met • Be treated with respect • Be informed about their children’s behaviours and learning needs • Be able to express concerns and to be listened to
All students have a responsibility to:	All staff have a responsibility to:	All parents have a responsibility to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect the rights of others • Explore their full potential • Follow the school rules • Demonstrate the school values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build positive relationships with students as a basis for engagement and learning • Use and manage the resources of the school to create stimulating, safe and meaningful learning • Treat all members of the school community with respect and fairness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build positive relationships with members of the school community • Ensure students attend school on time, with the appropriate materials • Support the school by reinforcing the values, rules and expectations • To provide the school with current home, work and emergency contact telephone numbers

BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING

Dandenong South Primary School provides a positive school culture where bullying and cyber bullying are not accepted. In doing so, the whole school community has the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in the school environment. There are three

broad categories of bullying and cyber bullying. These are explained in the school's Bullying and [Cyber Bullying Policies](#).

CYBERSAFETY

It is an expectation that cybersafety awareness teaching and learning programs, which align with the Victorian Curriculum, are implemented across the school. Each sub-school provides explicit learning opportunities which focus on the skills and strategies associated with cybersafety. A variety of online teaching tools provided by the Australian Communications and Media Authority and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development are used to personalise and engage learning opportunities for individual and groups of students, which focus on online safety.

EXPECTATIONS

The Leadership Team is expected to:

- *Provide professional development opportunities for all staff members to develop their understanding about cybersafety and preventative measures for cyber bullying. These opportunities have included:*
 - *ACMA cybersafety professional development for staff*
 - *Connect.ed Online Learning Cyber smart Online Education Program*
 - *Professional Development of Educators – Identify and Prevent Cyber bullying*
 - *Greater Dandenong Network Student Support Services, Cybersafety Grades 5 and 6*
- *Provide information to parents to develop awareness about cybersafety and safe internet usage. This has included:*
 - *ACMA cybersafety information sessions for parents*
 - *Providing information such as the Cyber smart Guide for families*
 - *Providing online safety tips in newsletter articles*

All classroom teachers in Foundation and the Junior Sub-School are expected to:

- *Use 'Hectors World' as a resource to explicitly teach students how to keep their password safe*

All classroom teachers in the Middle Sub-School are expected to:

- *Use 'Bullystoppers' and 'Games and Quizzes' to explicitly teach students how to stay safe online*
- *Attend DET/Office of the e-Safety Commissioner cyber safety sessions when provided and complete follow up learning opportunities*

All classroom teachers in the Senior Sub-School are expected to:

- *Use 'GameOn', 'DigiPubs', and 'Bullystoppers' to explicitly teach digital literacy skills and online safety skills*
- *Attend DET/Office of the e-Safety Commissioner cyber safety sessions when provided and complete follow up learning opportunities*

SHARED EXPECTATIONS

The school community has developed shared expectations for staff, students and parents to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive and set out the anticipated and appropriate behaviours of the school community. The shared expectations are intended to support all members of the school community from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, communities and experiences.

EXPECTATIONS - STAFF ENGAGEMENT

The Leadership Team is expected to:

- Uphold the right of every child to receive an education
- Ensure that the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligations under the Equal Opportunity and Humans Rights legislation
- Collaborate with the schools community to develop policies and procedures consistent with the schools values and the Departmental Guidelines
- Identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning, educational and extra-curricular activities, facilities, student services and community linkages which are inclusive and responsive to student needs

The teachers are expected to:

- Develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage different learners
- Deliver a curriculum and assessment that challenges and extends students learning
- Develop positive and meaningful relationships with students that promote engagement, wellbeing and learning
- Provide opportunities for student participation in the decision making process of the school

ATTENDANCE

In compliance with Departmental procedures, Dandenong South Primary School employees are expected to:

- Promote regular attendance with all members of the school community
- Monitor and follow up on absences

BEHAVIOUR

Dandenong South Primary School promotes positive behaviours by developing and implementing the use of logical and consistent consequences to address appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. As students are expected to participate in the curriculum, the school is committed to engaging all students in a safe and stimulating learning environment. The school will only exclude students in extreme circumstances.

The Leadership Team is expected to:

- Lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues

- Monitor the profile of behavioural issues at the school and effectiveness of implemented strategies
- Provide appropriate professional development opportunities for staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours

Teachers are expected to:

- Explicitly teach interpersonal skills
- Negotiate classroom protocols with students
- Implement behaviour management strategies that are consistent with the whole school approach
- Build a collegiate atmosphere with other staff to share strategies relating to behaviour management

**EXPECTATIONS - STUDENTS
ENGAGEMENT**

Students are expected to:

- Establish healthy, positive relationships with teachers and students
- Show respect to everyone who attends the school
- Have high expectations for themselves and make the most of the learning opportunities provided
- Report any behaviour which is unsafe or causes them distress

ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to come to school every day. If the students can't attend school they must provide an explanation from their parents/guardians. Students should arrive to class on time, ready to learn.

BEHAVIOUR

Students are expected to:

- Support each other's learning
- Observe the rules of the school
- Follow all teachers' instructions
- Be considerate and supportive of each other
- Understand that bullying and cyber bullying, property damage, violence and inappropriate language is unacceptable
- Understand that disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable

EXPECTATIONS - PARENTS ENGAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR

Parents are expected to:

- Promote the value of education, diversity and cultural differences in the home environment
- Help the school to provide student centered responses by providing all relevant information to the school
- Actively participate in supporting their children's learning by building positive relationships with the school. This can be done by attending student-parent-teacher meetings, special event activities, assemblies and responding to notices and telephone communication in a timely manner
- Understand and support Dandenong South Primary Schools behavioural expectations to promote consistence both in and out of the school

ATTENDANCE

Parents are expected to provide correct enrolment details for their child and ensure that their child attends school regularly. When a child is absent from school, parents must advise the school as soon as possible.

SCHOOLS ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Dandenong South Primary School has a series of actions and consequences which have been developed in consultation with the school community. These actions and consequences are used to support individual students and their families, via a staged response approach, which is consistent across the school. The students have some ownership in this process by negotiating the classroom protocols at the beginning of each year.

REWARDING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Staff across the school may:

- Provide positive notes for students to take home
- Provide positive reinforcement and feedback
- Select students for the weekly Principals Award
- Select students for the Aussie of the Month Award
- Make announcements at assembly to celebrate success
- Write articles in the school newsletter to celebrate success

CLASSROOM STAGED RESPONSE

A restorative classroom setting is one that values dialogue through an inclusive approach where everyone expects to be heard, and through this participatory process students develop the capacity to

learn in a practical way that emotions are an important and legitimate expression of healthy dialogue. This helps students deal with conflict, tensions and difference in respectful ways that engenders trust, empathy, responsibility, and fosters healthy relationships.

When positive behaviours are not demonstrated by individual students in the classroom or specialist classes the following staged response is put in place:

- Classroom teachers use restorative dialogue to deal with issues, which involves conversations with a student about their behavior and how it impacts on others, ultimately working out how to put things right.
- The classroom teacher may use individual informal use of restorative language with a student or may require the use of a 'circle' to restore a sense of connection and wellbeing through respectful and democratic dialogue.
- The classroom teacher may require further assistance with the support of the Sub School Team Leader/Assistant Principal/Principal/ Welfare Officer and the parents are called for a follow up meeting.

YARD STAGED RESPONSE

When positive behaviours are not demonstrated by individual students in the yard, the following staged response is put in place:

- The yard duty teacher uses restorative dialogue to deal with the incident, which is directed to:
 - Person responsible:** What happened?
Who has been hurt/affected?
 - Person harmed:** How has this hurt/ affected you?
What would you like to see happen?
 - To All:** Is that okay?
What can we do so this doesn't happen again?

If the incident requires further follow up, it is directed to the Sub School Team Leader for further consideration.

ONGOING BEHAVIOURAL ISSUES

For students who exhibit ongoing behavioural issues; these strategies may be used:

- Discussing the behaviour problems using the restorative dialogue and reaching an agreement for future behaviour
- Using 'Circle time' or class meetings in the grade in which students share their feelings, ideas and concerns and problem solve together on a regular basis
- Explicit teaching of appropriate behaviours
- Monitoring and providing feedback – this may be in a parent communication book or a student diary
- Providing 'Time Out' allowing students to have a 'cooling off' period

- Withdrawing a student from an activity, class, incursion or excursion due to inappropriate behaviour
- Providing an alternative educational setting within the school
- Student support meetings which may involve parents, the school's Welfare Officer, relevant DET staff or outside agencies
- In school suspensions for serious and/or continual misconduct. This will be implemented after parents have been notified.
- Suspension and Expulsion. For serious disciplinary measures the school follows 'DET Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'. Refer to <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf>

(Refer to <http://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2016/GG2016S002.pdf> for the Ministerial Order No.870)