

# **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY**



## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Cambridge Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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## 1. School Profile

Cambridge Primary School was established in 1992 with 240 students. The school has grown rapidly and we currently have 950 students of which 490 are males and 460 females. As Cambridge Primary School has a strict enrolment policy, and students must reside within our 'designated neighbourhood area', a majority of our students reside in and around the area. The present school population is culturally and socially diverse and includes approximately 50 nationalities.

Of our 710 families 316 are unemployed and 383 have been listed in the SFO as Unskilled/Labourers and 300 are qualified professionals. The school's LBOTE (Language Background Other Than English) has increased to approximately 447 of the total school population. We have 16 students on the Program for Students with Disabilities and 217 families access Camps Sports and Excursion Fund.

Designed as a true community centre, the school buildings and surrounds provide facilities for our students and the broader community. An upgrade completed in 2004 saw seven additional permanent classrooms and ancillary spaces replace some of the school's relocatable buildings. A large synthetic turf soccer field, asphalt upgrades, amphitheatre, water tanks, community building, second gymnasium, additional playground equipment and the installation of a security fence around the school have been additions over the last decade.

We are committed to ensuring that our physical spaces are conducive to a productive, safe and supportive learning and playing environment. The school currently operates single-level classrooms. The 44 classroom teachers are supported by 7 staff in specialist teaching roles, 13 Support staff, 10 Education Support Officers – Integration aides, 5 Education Support Officers – Administration, 5 Principal Class Officers and a range of auxiliary staff including canteen manager, ICT support, library technician and school maintenance supervisor.

The school engages a diverse cross section of our community in meeting the wellbeing needs of our students and maintains a strong commitment to developing links with the community and forging partnerships with local organisations to build student engagement, through

- Royal Children's Hospital
- Out of School Hours Care
- Vacation Care Program
- Transition programs to pre-schoolers and secondary schools.

Extra curricula wellbeing programs are offered over break times including dance group, cool, calm & connected club, chess club, friendship group, robotics, choir and gardening assisting in connecting students to school and improving student morale.

## 2. School Values

Cambridge Primary School has four values which we expect all our community to model - *RESPECT, INTEGRITY, SELF-RESILIENCE and EXCELLENCE*. The school implements a diverse range of programs to support student engagement, school attendance and positive behaviours. Strong links are made with our local community wherever possible. The school accesses health professionals including speech pathologists and psychologists, together with welfare organisations in an effort to address the wellbeing needs of our families. A whole school approach that focuses on safety, early intervention, prevention and wellbeing is employed and permeates the curriculum and extra – curricular programs at the school.

### **At Cambridge Primary School we believe:**

- Students are better prepared for learning when they are in a safe, supportive and engaging environment
- How students learn is as important as what they learn
- Student resilience is promoted through a relationship with at least one caring adult
- A culture of inclusiveness strengthens students' sense of connection
- Social connectedness builds resilience
- A sense of significance emerges for students when they feel they have something to contribute
- Teacher modelling and teaching of pro-social behaviour is vital
- Student behaviour management and discipline procedures can contribute to long term social goals
- Peer relations contribute significantly to social and cognitive development
- The curriculum should incorporate students' personal and social issues
- Learning is enhanced through positive social and emotional dynamics between students.

Cambridge Primary School aims to provide a stimulating, supportive and caring environment. The school acknowledges and celebrates individuality by having a positive view of the uniqueness of the learner while focussing on individual growth and the fostering of talents. We are committed to developing highly literate and numerate students; who can think critically, take risks, seize opportunities enthusiastically, are resilient and work collaboratively with others, while at the same time showing respect and care for the rights of others.

**At Cambridge Primary School we believe student learning cannot be separated from student wellbeing.**

## 3. Engagement Strategies

Cambridge Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

**The school has in place the following programs and policies which address student wellbeing and engagement at Cambridge Primary School:**

#### **CURRICULUM PROGRAMS**

- Bike Education
- Bravehearts (Prep-Year 1)
- Buddies program
- Camps (Year 4 and 6)
- Cybersafety (Year 2-6)
- Dance program (Preps - Year 4)
- Enrichment
- Enrichment Art/Maths
- Interschool Sports (Year 6)
- Kidsmatter
- Literacy and Numeracy intervention
- Peer mediation
- Peer support
- Personal development (Knowing and Growing)
- Respectful Relationships
- School Nursing program
- Student Leadership (Years 4 - 6)
- Student counselling
- Swimming
- Values program

#### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

- Breakfast Club
- Chess
- Choir
- Education and Book Week
- Lunch time clubs
- Mentoring
- Music Bus
- Out of School Hours Care
- Robotics
- Speech therapy
- Sports clinics
- Talent Quest
- Vacation Care
- Young Leaders

#### **POLICIES/PROTOCOLS**

- Anaphylaxis
- Anti-bullying
- Asthma Management
- Attendance
- Behaviour Management Plans
- Camps and Excursions
- Canteen
- Child Safe
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Community Code of Practice
- Curriculum Framework
- Custody
- Dress Code
- Drug Education
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Equal Opportunity
- Head Lice
- Homework
- Immunisation
- Individual Learning Plans
- Mandatory Reporting
- Mobile Phone
- OH&S (including sexual harassment)
- Out of School Hours Care (numerous policies)
- Privacy
- Raising Concerns and Complaints
- Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Welfare and Discipline Parent booklet
- Sun Smart
- Traffic Safety
- Visitors to the School
- Whole school Transition

#### **4. Identifying Students in need of Support**

Cambridge Primary School has a strong connection with the following organisations which provide us with additional support and advice in relation to student wellbeing:

- Western Autistic School

- Western Language School
- Royal Children’s Hospital Mental Health Services
- Local paediatricians and speech pathologists
- IPC Primary Care – Family Services
- The Smith Family
- DHHS
- MacKillop Family Services
- DET Counselling services

We build strong links with the community through our annual colour fun run, Science and Maths nights, weekly assemblies run by the students and other events exhibiting student work.

## 5. Student rights and responsibilities

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment which is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Our school community has a right to a safe and caring environment which promotes and fosters learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem. The school is committed to providing an environment that treats all individuals with respect, courtesy and care and the right to feel safe.

All members of the school community are expected to follow our Values ethos which forms part of the school’s culture.

All students have equal access to all opportunities offered within the school. Parents and students have opportunities to become involved in the decision-making processes of the school, through School Council and its various sub committees, through student leadership and through parent and student surveys.

The school complies with the rights of the students under the *Disabilities Discrimination Act 1992*. The standards cover enrolments, participation in all aspects of school life, curriculum development, student support services and harassment and victimization. ‘Reasonable adjustments’ are made to accommodate the student’s disability. The school’s physical environment caters for students with disabilities as needed.

The school has considered in the development of these policy guidelines the following legislation which directly impacts on this Student Engagement Policy.

- **Equal Opportunity Act 1995**
- **Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005**
- **Education and Training Reform Act 2006.**

The school has a commitment to implementing programs that address bullying issues including cyber bullying. Our Values program along with Buddies program, peer mediation, peer support and an extensive range of lunchtime programs are all geared to support the development of social

competencies as well as the school’s Vision and Mission Statements.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rights of Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To feel safe and secure</li> <li>• To be treated with respect and to be valued as an individual</li> <li>• To be involved in learning</li> <li>• To have access to quality teaching and programs</li> <li>• To know their property is safe</li> <li>• To work in a clean tidy school</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Responsibilities of Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make others feel safe and secure</li> <li>• To treat others with respect</li> <li>• To value others as individuals</li> <li>• To allow other students to learn</li> <li>• To respect and care for the property of others</li> <li>• To respect and care for school property</li> <li>• To help keep our school clean and tidy</li> <li>• Attend school regularly</li> <li>• To develop a growth mindset</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rights of Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be valued and respected</li> <li>• To work in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment</li> <li>• To be shown courtesy and cooperation</li> <li>• To know their property is safe</li> <li>• To work in a clean tidy school</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Responsibilities of Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy</li> <li>• To know how students learn and how to teach them effectively</li> <li>• To know the students and content they teach</li> <li>• To plan and assess for effective learning</li> <li>• To create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments</li> <li>• To use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning</li> <li>• To respect and care for school property</li> <li>• To respond quickly when students are unsafe</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rights of Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be shown courtesy and cooperation and to feel welcome</li> <li>• To feel valued and respected</li> <li>• To participate in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment</li> <li>• To be informed about their child’s progress</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Responsibilities of Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support and respect rules within the school</li> <li>• To support the educational needs of students</li> <li>• To value and respect the staff of the school and other members of the school community</li> <li>• To ensure their child’s regular attendance at school</li> <li>• To interact in a courteous and non-threatening manner</li> </ul>

## 6. Shared Expectations and student behavioural expectations

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

Cambridge Primary School provides a clear set of values that supports a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. Staff are expected to plan and implement relevant and challenging curriculum that allows students to experience success with their learning. Teaching practices are inclusive of all students and consider the varying learning needs of groups of students such as students with physical or learning disabilities and EAL students. The school caters for the varying interests of students by providing a range of academic, sporting, environmental, visual and performing arts opportunities and encourages students to challenge themselves. Leadership opportunities are also accessible to senior students. Our School Captains and House Captains in conjunction with the Junior School Council take an active part in a range of school activities and events. The school has developed a range of community partnerships that are involved in supporting the diversity of programs implemented. Many opportunities are available for parents/caregivers to become involved in the school as a volunteer, School Council or to visit the school to observe their child/ren's learning in action. Students and parents/caregivers have access to student support services that will provide them with learning or wellbeing support or assistance. The school employs a counsellor who provides wellbeing support to students and their families if appropriate, and implements a range of wellbeing programs.

Cambridge Primary School has clear expectations of all community members. All school community members (staff, students, parents/carers) are expected to follow our school values when dealing or interacting with one another.

**We believe all students can learn and benefit from attending our school through actively engaging in a challenging and inclusive curriculum and by maintaining positive relationships based on these expectations.**

### **Expectations of Students**

- Attend school regularly and be punctual
- Demonstrate a growth mindset towards their learning and participate positively in all class/school activities
- Allow others to learn and work at all times
- Always listen when others are speaking
- Follow instructions and directions the first time they are given
- Respect all school property and others' property including your own
- Use your manners at all times e.g. saying 'thank you', please, waiting your turn and putting your hand up
- Be safe at all times. Violent behaviour is not acceptable (physical, verbal, and emotional)
- Ask for assistance when required
- Embrace the school values
- Set achievable personal and learning goals
- Contribute to and manage your learning to achieve your full potential
- Display positive behaviours

### **Expectations of Teachers**

All staff at Cambridge Primary School will adhere by the Victorian Institute of Teaching 'Professional Code of Conduct'. A teacher's professional conduct is characterized by the quality of the relationships they have with their students, their students' parents / guardians / caregivers, families and communities and their colleagues. Staff at Cambridge Primary School will conduct themselves in the following manner:

- To create an engaging and dynamic learning environment with focused teaching
- To set high expectations for students so they can achieve their full potential
- To deliver an inclusive curriculum engaging every student in learning
- To communicate positively with students, colleagues and parents, respecting their diverse backgrounds
- To provide a stimulating, safe, positive and productive learning environment
- To develop a relationship with every student
- To ensure that every student is provided with the resources and tools to further their primary education
- To offer varied, stimulating activities that enhance student learning and develop a growth mindset
- Work with student leaders to promote student voice and agency.

### **Expectations of the Principal / Principal Class Officers**

- Provide leadership to school staff and students
- Ensure staff, students and the wider school community understand their expectations
- Ensure staff and students have the resources, equipment and materials to assist them in the delivery of teaching and learning
- The school curriculum takes into account the varying needs of specific students where practicable such as students with disabilities and students from non-English speaking backgrounds
- Encourage parent participation in all aspects of the school
- Develop community partnerships
- To be up to date with current pedagogy and innovations

### **Expectations of Student Wellbeing and Education Support Staff**

- Provide support during the school day as the need arises to staff, students and parents/carers
- Develop and implement preventative programs based on the needs of the students or parents/carers
- Investigate avenues of assistance or support outside the school when required
- Make connections with external wellbeing agencies
- Work closely with all school support wellbeing staff to determine the best option for assistance
- Maintain trust and confidentiality
- Display understanding, caring and non-judgmental attitudes
- Abide by any mandatory reporting procedures
- Work closely with parents/caregivers to address issues and needs together

- Adhere to all child safety processes and procedures
- Support students to achieve success with individual learning plans and goals.

### **Expectations of Parents/Carers**

- Support your child to arrive each day at school before the morning bell
- Ensure your child maintains an attendance rate of 95% or more over the school year
- Encourage positive behaviours at all times by your child/ren without impeding on the safety or learning opportunities of others
- Promote positive educational outcomes for your child/ren
- Cooperate with requests from the school to support your child's/ren educational experiences and needs
- Communicate & comply clearly and appropriately with the school about the needs of your child/ren
- Work with the school to address matters of concern such as learning, wellbeing or behavioural issues
- Be proactive when working with the school in addressing wellbeing or behavioural issues of your child/ren
- Follow through with recommendations that will improve the educational or wellbeing opportunities of your child
- Support your child/ren with their educational needs
- Reinforce the school values, rules and student expectations with your child/ren
- Assist with maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all students by acting as a responsible role model
- Attend Parent/Teacher Interviews & other formally requested meetings

### **Agreed Principles**

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 safe and positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged approach, 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.

The following principles support the goals of our whole school plan for behaviour management. They relate directly to the school expectations.

- The Rights/Responsibilities and School Expectations model will form the basis for all behaviour management
- All teachers will clarify Rights/Responsibilities and School Expectations with students at the classroom level and whole school level and promote them within the teaching and learning program
- Mutual respect will be invited, modelled and expected
- Acceptable behaviour will be actively promoted, supported and taught
- Positive corrective language will be used
- Unnecessary confrontation when managing students will be minimised by focusing on the behaviour
- **Consequences will be related and reasonable and follow a 'staged response'.**

### **Agreed Practices**

The following organisational practices are based on the above principles

#### **Rewards, Encouragement and Incentives**

Positive reinforcement is a very powerful tool in the management of student behaviour. Staff should seek every opportunity to praise, reward and acknowledge positive student behaviour. While important for all students, it is particularly important for the student whose behaviour is difficult to manage. We need to 'catch' students doing the right thing and apply positive consequences to ensure they repeat the behaviour.

#### **Student Supervision**

Teachers have a duty of care to ensure students are supervised at all times. This is provided by classroom or specialist teachers during lessons and by five yard duty teachers while students are in the playground at break times. If a teacher has to leave a group of students under their supervision it is essential another teacher is notified and assumes supervision.

Playground supervision is a very important responsibility and teachers must ensure they are in the yard punctually at specified times. Due to the extensive size of our grounds the yard duty teachers are required to supervise five separate areas of the yard to maintain order & provide watchful supervision. Other organised activities are run during lunchtimes.

Yard duty supervision concludes when the bell rings and the children assemble to come inside. Teachers need to ensure they are prompt in returning from breaks to ensure students are not left unsupervised.

**At Cambridge Primary School we will respond to all undesired behaviours: calmly consistently, briefly, immediately, respectfully and privately.**

**Teachers, students, families and carers will be referred to the Student Behaviour Matrix Roadmap to address all undesired behaviours. This is the Roadmap:**



At Cambridge Primary School, we respond to all undesired behaviours: calmly, consistently, briefly, immediately, respectfully and privately

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Classroom Teachers respond when students demonstrate:	Student Wellbeing Leader respond when students demonstrate:	Assistant Principals respond when students demonstrate:
School uniform infringements.	Refusing to complete work or follow instructions of any staff member.	Bullying/harassment including cyber-bullying, to, at and from school. Physical or verbal abuse of student or staff member.
Being unprepared for class.	Theft of school or others property.	Behaving in any way that makes a person feel unsafe.
Being late to class.	Participation in initiation and/or threatening behaviour (includes by-standing)	Using ICT to abuse the rights of others (using camera, social media)
Leaving class without permission.	Using discriminatory/abusive language toward student / teacher	Critical offences.
Refusing to follow instructions.	<b>*any repeated and continuous Level 2 behaviours</b>	Repeated defiance.
Disrupting the learning of others.	<b>Procedure</b>	Inappropriate behaviour that is demonstrated when representing the school.
Disrespecting the personal space of others.	<b>STEP 1</b> Temporarily remove student from classroom.	Leaving the school grounds without permission. 1. A.P will contact DSD 2. Parents will be contacted to come and assist the school to locate their child
Uttering.	<b>STEP 2</b> School values reflection form to be completed.	<b>*any repeated and continuous Level 2 behaviours</b>
Inappropriate use of school equipment (STEM equipment/sporting equipment/tools etc)	<b>STEP 3</b> Re-engage student to normal class activity - restorative conversation is held, agreed actions listed and reflection sheet signed by classroom teacher and student.	<b>Procedure</b>
Bringing banned items to school (guns, playing knife, razor etc.)	<b>STEP 4</b> Consequence communicated to student.	<b>Step 1</b> Remove student from classroom.
Unsafe movement within the school (running, leaning, riding without a helmet, using corridors during break time)	<b>STEP 5</b> Phone call home / Compass Chronicle (AMBER) Reflection form to be filed for future reference.	<b>Step 2</b> <b>Method 1: Restorative</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student placed in another classroom for the day with work and different break times - or Year 6 student in Year 2 classroom</li> <li>Student not attending Year 6 class and attend alternative class for the month</li> <li>Student completes a letter of reflection with signed break times</li> <li>Student not well aware of school ground/management</li> <li>Temporarily stood down from school responsibility (school captain, house captain, etc, art ambassador)</li> </ul> Work must be completed by classroom teacher
Participating in undesirable or unsafe behaviour on school grounds. (throwing things, climbing on non-play structures, running through gardens, play fighting)	<b>Consequence Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After school detention</li> <li>Internal suspension</li> <li>Write apology letter</li> <li>Daily report</li> <li>Check in check out</li> </ul>	<b>Step 3</b> Consequence communicated to parents and student
Accessing out of hours areas.	<b>*Please note: If behaviour continues after student has been exited - escalate consequences to level 3</b>	<b>STEP 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone call home / Compass Chronicle (RED)</li> <li>Escalate to impact response and involve contacting senior management</li> </ul>
<b>Procedure</b>		<b>LEVEL 4</b> The Principal responds when students engage in:
<b>STEP 1</b> Removal		Physical violence
<b>STEP 2</b> Verbal Warning Removal school uniform		Vandalism of school amenities or vandalism while wearing school uniform
<b>STEP 3</b> Confiscation of item and class to complete school values reflection form.		<b>*any repeated and continuous Level 3 behaviours</b>
<b>STEP 4</b> Teacher consequence set and communicated.		<b>Procedure</b>
<b>STEP 5</b> Repeated/continuous level 3 behaviours (at least 3 or more steps to one step contact Student Wellbeing and SD)		<b>Step 1</b> <b>PRINCIPAL ONLY</b> Suspension from school Internal & External Suspension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student has opportunity to Behave!</li> <li>Parents contacted</li> <li>Letter</li> <li>Work provided</li> <li>Return to school meeting if required</li> <li>Student to attend meeting (if not in class)</li> </ul>
<b>STEP 6</b> Restorative conversation, Compass Chronicle (GREEN)		<b>LEVEL 5</b> <b>*any repeated and continuous Level 4 behaviours</b>
<b>Consequence Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community service</li> <li>Write apology letter</li> <li>Break time detention</li> <li>Seating plan</li> <li>Confiscate item/device for the session</li> <li>Parent contact</li> </ul>		<b>Step 1</b> <b>PRINCIPAL ONLY</b> Escalate to impact

Violent &/or Aggressive Behaviours require a Staged Response from staff. This is the staged response flowchart:



## Violent &/or Aggressive Behaviour Staged Response

### Classroom teacher/Support person actions

Make sure that a staff member remains with the student, providing verbal support or monitoring. Do not restrain or seclude the student.

If the student is being violent consider:

- Removing them to another location
- Removing other students
- Observing them from a distance
- Remove any objects that pose a threat to self and others

Seek support in the following order from leadership/support person

- 1 Assistant Principal Wellbeing – EXT 110/655 Sue (0409 000 785)
- 2 Assistant Principal – EXT 103 Jane (0412 453 454) Kelly (0412 868 375)
- 3 Leading Teacher – Karen & Lauren (EXT – 167)
- 4 Learning Specialist – Michelle (EXT – 133), Clayton (EXT – 125)

### Leadership actions

Contact Police and Emergency Services **000** if a significant risk of harm to self or others.

Contact Emergency Management  
**(03) 9589 6266**

Contact student's parents/caregiver/guardian

Contact Student Support Services

Follow and complete school based staged response

**Suspension and expulsion** are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

### **Absenteeism**

The need for highly regular school attendance will be articulated to parents and students. The principal or their delegated nominated staff member, has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school. All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, are aggregated on Compass and communicated to the Department of Education and Training. The Department of Education and Training and enrolment auditors may seek student attendance records. The principal or their nominated staff member has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated on the day of the absence, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained. The principal/assistant principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences. Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised. Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the principal to the Department of Human Services, Child First and/or the Wellbeing/Attendance Officer at the Regional Office.

A return to school plan can be implemented to assist in the reintegration of students after a prolonged absence.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is recognised globally as a complex and serious problem. It is a form of aggression, involving the abuse of power in relationships. It has many faces, including the use of emerging technologies, and varies by age, gender and culture. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are **not** defined as bullying.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders

While there is no commonly accepted definition of bullying, commentators in the field (Olweus, 1999; Ross, 2002; Smith & Brain, 2000; Smith, 2005) generally agree that bullying has the following characteristics:

- It consists of **repeated** negative actions
- It is intended to cause distress
- It involves an imbalance in power
- It is directed towards a specific individual or group
- It can be conducted in person, covertly through direction of the actions of others, or through information and communication technologies.

### **Four kinds of bullying**

Bullying can take a number of different forms. The Department of Education and Training's Building Respectful and Safe Schools (2010) identifies four types of bullying:

#### **1. Physical bullying**

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

## **2. Verbal bullying**

Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

## **3. Covert bullying**

Covert bullying is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation.

Covert bullying includes;

- Lying and spreading rumours
- Negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- Mimicking unkindly
- Encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- Damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

## **4. Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Examples include harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. Cyberbullying can happen at any time. It can be in public or in private, and sometimes is only known to the target and the person bullying.

## **WHAT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE BULLYING**

There are some behaviors which although unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

### **1. Mutual Conflict**

In mutual conflict, an argument or disagreement exists between students but there is no imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

### **2. Social Rejection or Dislike**

Unless the social dislike is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

### **3. Single-episodic acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation**

Single sporadic acts of nastiness or physical aggression although unacceptable is not bullying. If a student is verbally abused or hurt by another student on only one occasion they are not being bullied. Single acts of nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

## **Dealing with Bullying at Cambridge Primary School**

At Cambridge Primary School we are committed to the safety and welfare of all students. We are constantly striving to make school a place where students can have fun and feel safe and connected. Unfortunately research suggests bullying is quite a "normal" behaviour among school children but this doesn't mean we condone its practice or accept the behaviour. We work hard to prevent and deal with bullying at Cambridge Primary School.

Students are encouraged to report any bullying incidents to an adult and not to remain silent about it. Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken to, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.(Refer to Anti-Bullying & Student Welfare Policy and Student Code of Conduct)

#### **Staff will**

- Be provided with professional development training relating to bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment and child safety guidelines
- Implement school curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- Clarify to their class at the start of each year the school policy on bullying
- Follow school protocols and procedures when investigating student matters
- Intervene and swiftly manage any bullying situation that is encountered or reported by a student or family
- Contact families to discuss bullying incidents or other incidents of inappropriate behaviour
- Inform families of any investigations undertaken and any follow up action
- Ensure all reported incidents of bullying are followed up
- Offer comfort and support to victims
- Seek parental support and cooperation
- Record incidents
- Run cyber-bullying information sessions for parents each year
- Include cyber safety as part of the delivered curriculum
- Administer the Bullying survey to students.

#### **Parents will:**

Watch for signs of bullying and alert the school if they believe their child is being bullied, rather than 'deal' with this themselves. The following signs could suggest a child is being bullied

- School refusal
- Frequent illness
- Not wanting to go out at recess or lunch time
- Frequently without lunch money
- Easily upset
- Frightened of walking to school
- Changes route to school
- Clothes and /or books damaged
- Withdrawn, stammering
- More easily upset than usual
- Unexplained bruises or scratches
- Refuses to say what is wrong
- Refuses to use the school toilets
- Gives unlikely excuses to explain the above
- Be invited and encouraged to attend cyber-bullying information sessions.

#### **STRATEGIES: THAT PARENTS CAN USE IF THEIR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED**

- Report any bullying matters immediately to the school. Discuss the situation with your child's classroom teacher or with a member of the school's leadership team.
- Do not try and resolve the matter yourself by approaching any students or families.

Parents should try to obtain as many facts as they can through discussion with their child so that they can identify if there is a **REPEATED** pattern. Try to identify and write down:

- What happened
- Who was involved on each occasion
- Where and when these things happened
- Whether there was any provocation on the part of the victim
- Who witnessed each situation
- Did anybody else see it, and, if so, who;
- When the bullying first began;
- What solutions you have tried so far; and
- The names of any teachers who are aware of the problem
- As soon as you have a reasonably clear picture of the situation and the facts let your child know that you are approaching the school
- Make an appointment with your child's teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal or a member of the leadership team to discuss the matter (please ring the office to make an appointment so we may give the matter our full attention)

#### **At the meeting:**

- Bring notes of the information you have gathered as suggested above.
- Present your concern and information in a calm way and try to work with the school to resolve the problem. Becoming angry, making accusations or demanding certain actions may make the situation worse.
- It can be helpful to remember that if you were originally unaware of the problem, then your child's teacher may also not have known of the situation.
- Be patient. The school will need time to investigate the matter and speak to all the students and staff (if applicable) involved.
- Ask to see the school's Anti-Bullying policy to see the school's approach to dealing with bullying.
- The school will contact you to discuss the outcome of the investigation and to outline the steps it will take to resolve the matter.
- Arrange a further meeting to discuss the plan for dealing with the matter and any future bullying incidents.

## **7. Engaging with Families**

Cambridge Primary School works hard to develop within our school community, an understanding of the structure in which children, staff and parents interact. We further believe that we should develop positive relationships that link high levels of personal self-esteem and appropriate social behaviour with our students.

We aim to:

- provide a **consistent** approach that will assist in the building of positive, valued relationships between all school community members
- provide a caring, safe environment that will foster the educational, social, emotional and physical well-being of the children
- establish an environment where students, staff and parents become aware of their rights and responsibilities

- assist each group within the school community to understand and respect the rights and responsibilities of our students, staff and parents
- establish a set of rules for appropriate behaviours both within the classroom and outside in the yard and together with this, develop **logical consequences** if inappropriate behaviour should occur (following the Behaviour Matrix Roadmap)
- develop children's skills in self-discipline, enabling them to make appropriate and informed decisions
- provide children with strategies for conflict resolution
- provide an environment in which the development of the child's self-esteem is valued
- provide a supportive environment that involves teachers and parents and the wider community in drug related curriculum, welfare and harassment issues.

Implementation will include:

- Children are to participate at the beginning of each year in the establishment of class rules
- All students, staff and parents need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities and the rules which govern our school's operations as documented in our Strategic Plan and in this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Students need to be aware of the Behaviour Matrix Roadmap and consequences for their actions

- Teachers' classroom management plan are to be consistent with the whole school's approach
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) current guidelines for Student Code of Conduct, Suspension & Expulsion will be adhered to
- The community will be made aware of the legislation related to equal opportunity, bullying and harassment.

**Implementation:**

- All new staff will need to be familiar with the document for there to be effective whole school implementation
- School expectations and classroom agreements should be displayed in classroom and other key locations
- Students should be involved in developing classroom agreements at the commencement of each year

**Evaluation:**

This document is to be reviewed and revised each year.

<b><u>Ratification Date</u></b>	<b><u>Review Date</u></b>	<b><u>Policy No</u></b>	<b><u>Version</u></b>	<b><u>Date Produced</u></b>
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