



Student Engagement Policy



Rationale:

At Footscray West Primary School (FWPS) we believe that students reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked, and we aim to promote an understanding of this link in both the school environment and in the classroom.

Aims:

- To provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment.
- To outline the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community.

School Profile

Footscray West Primary School is a large government primary school located in an inner residential area in Melbourne's western suburbs. Traditionally a working class neighbourhood, the suburb of West Footscray has become increasingly gentrified. Presently the school services a pupil population of approximately 620 students, who come from a wide range of social, cultural and economic backgrounds. We support all students with social, emotional or behavioural needs and we remain a culturally rich and diverse school community.

We have established a positive school culture for learning and human development throughout the school community using the Tribes process. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's learning through a variety of forums (assemblies, concerts, art show, classroom helpers, school council members, parent club and environmental group)

Our child centred curriculum is based upon the principles of developmental learning and offers a comprehensive education across all areas. Through the Tribes process, we facilitate the development of knowledge, skills and resilience in our students to assist them to achieve their personal best. This whole school approach supports the development of positive interpersonal skills. The school facilities consist of six buildings which include carpeted, air-conditioned classrooms, library, gym, art craft, Italian and music rooms, a canteen and a designated area for Out of School Hours Care. All classrooms are linked to the school network and feature large televisions or interactive whiteboards. The school is on a large site which has ample playing areas with both grass and asphalted spaces which are shared with local community groups. Large undercover and shade areas are provided. Outdoor learning areas, an orchard and garden also feature. In addition to its own facilities, the school makes excellent use of Council parks, recreation facilities and local business. The area is well serviced by public transport.

Purpose/vision

At Footscray West we actively engage the school community to work and learn together in a supportive, inclusive environment. We facilitate the development of knowledge, skills and resilience in our students to assist them to achieve their personal best.

It is our vision to establish a positive school culture for learning and human development throughout the school community using the Tribes process to ensure the healthy development of every child. Our students will develop the knowledge, skills, and resiliency to be successful in a rapidly changing world. All teachers, leaders, support staff, students and community members work together as a learning community that is dedicated to caring and support, active participation, and positive expectation for all students. We are working together to establish a caring environment for cooperative learning and provide a structure for positive interaction and common language for groups across the school community to work together.

Values

- **Mutual Respect** - To affirm the value and uniqueness of each person, recognising and appreciating difference.
- **Appreciations / No Put-downs** - Care for self and others; state appreciations for unique qualities, gifts, skills and contributions; avoid negative remarks, name calling, hurtful gestures and behaviours
- **Team Work** - To learn together to achieve the best possible outcomes for all.
- **Responsibility** - To be accountable for one's actions and resolve differences in constructive, and peaceful ways. To contribute to society and to civic life and take care of the environment
- **Personal Best** - To actively strive towards achieving excellence

The school adopts the following principles:-

- Every child has the capacity to learn and reach their potential
- Development of positive attitudes to learning, life and self
- Promotion of excellence
- Effective teaching and learning through staff working in a teams
- Cooperation through responsible behaviour and self-discipline
- Education as a partnership between students, parents and staff

Implementation:

The Tribes process is the primary prevention strategy of the school. It is through the Tribes process that we build a positive and supportive school environment.

- At the start of each year a unit of work will be implemented around building relationships and establishing each class Values and Code of Conduct in line with the Tribes agreements
- The Tribes process and the Tribes agreements will form the basis of whole school discussions related to student behaviour, and provides a consistent dialogue for conflict resolution and adherence to school agreements
- The development of pro-social behaviours enables the students to build relationships with their teachers and their peers and encourages them to participate, contribute and provide feedback to each other and to the school
- All staff will be made aware of the Student Engagement and supporting policies
- Each year staff will sign off that they have read and understood the policies and supporting documents in relation to the contents and their responsibilities
- Policies will be available to the wider school community via the school's web site

- Regular communication to parents/carers regarding student engagement will be included in the school's newsletter.
- Support students that are having difficulty at school by putting in place appropriate support structures.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited at FWPS

The following policies support student engagement and outline staff, student, parent and caregivers expectations and responsibilities:

Attendance

Students of school age (six to seventeen years) resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, have a shared enrolment with a specialist setting, have received exemption from the Regional Director (Schools) or are enrolled in correspondence education. School times are 9.00am till 3.30pm.

Aims:

- To maximise learning opportunities and engagement by ensuring student absenteeism and lateness is kept to a minimum.
- To put into place agreed processes for managing absence and lateness within the school.

Bullying prevention

Footscray West Primary School rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environment.

Aim:

- To promote a caring and productive learning environment and not tolerate the bullying of students and staff.

Child Safety

Footscray West Primary School is a Tribes school. We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility and will act without hesitation to ensure their protection.

Cybersafety

Footscray West Primary School (FWPS) has an obligation to provide a safe, secure and caring environment. This responsibility is increasingly connected to digital technology, and ensuring that there is an awareness of the dangers associated with it. FWPS maintains a zero tolerance policy to the bullying of students and staff.

Aim:

- To establish, clear expectations for the FWPS community about cyber (online) safety.

Disabilities policy

Students with disabilities and impairments have a right to attend a mainstream government school and participate in purposeful, meaningful learning experiences based on their individual needs. Adjustments may be necessary to teaching and learning programs if the disability affects the student's ability to fully participate in the activity.

Aims:

- To provide all students with learning opportunities that cater for their individual needs.
- To ensure that those students who attract disability funding have programs tailored to meet their special requirements.

Duty of care

Whenever a student teacher relationship exists, the teacher has a special duty of care. This is a legal obligation to protect students from injury.

As part of that duty, teachers are required to supervise students adequately. This requires not only protection from known hazards, but also from those that could arise (those that the teacher could have reasonably foreseen) and against which preventative measures could have been taken.

Aim:

- For teachers, to carry out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that students are, as far as can be reasonably expected, protected from injury.

Mandatory reporting

School staff have a duty of care to protect and promote the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people in their care. Any person registered to teach by the Victorian Institute of Teaching is mandated to report to child protection when a belief based on reasonable grounds is formed that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm resulting from physical injury or sexual abuse and parents have not or are unlikely to protect the child from harm.

Aim:

- To ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Behavioural expectations and School Actions

Behavioural expectations for students, parent/carers and school staff are detailed in the schools policies and codes of conduct.

Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of the school community a staged response is implemented as outlined in the department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

Discipline will be applied in a way that is proportionate to the behaviour and upholds procedural fairness.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be applied when the grounds for suspension and expulsion set out in the Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the principal and the school will follow the processes as set out by the department.

All documents can be found on the schools web site at: <http://fwps.vic.edu.au/>

Evaluation:

This document will be reviewed annually. Policies contained as part of this document will be reviewed during their regular cycle.

