

Eastwood Primary School

**Student Engagement
&
Well-Being Policy**

April, 2010

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School Council President: Jenny Crozier**

At Eastwood everyone is working together to create a safe, respectful, happy and clean learning environment where we all encourage each other to do our best.

Enthusiasm Precedes Success

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1 School Profile Statement

Eastwood is located in the city of Maroondah 20 kilometres east of Melbourne CBD. The school has a current enrolment of 311 students. The school has a culture of continual improvement and academic rigor within a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere.

The school was established during the 1950s and facilities are characteristic of the light timbered construction popular during this period. Unfortunately, the state and configuration of predominantly small and dated single classrooms do not support the identified teaching and learning approaches of the school while the overall condition is poor and in need of renewal. Voluntary parent assistance helps maintain an attractive and treed school play area which includes an oval, sealed play areas and various playground areas. Environmental initiatives include the installation of a 100,000l water tank to service recently upgraded toilets and a Community Vegetable Garden.

The school has a Student Family Occupation density index of 0.46 which reflects a relatively low proportion of students with a family background other than English and a relatively higher socio-economic profile.

The school motto 'Enthusiasm Precedes Success' maintains significance with students, teachers and parents and underpins school values, behaviours and endeavours.

The Eastwood Deaf Facility, the first such facility in a mainstream Victorian school, was established at the school in 1993. This facility provides an excellent and highly successful integrated setting for deaf and hearing impaired students. It is supported by highly specialised staff. In 2009 we begin teaching Auslan (Australian sign language) as LOTE to all students which will further support the integration of our deaf and hearing impaired students. The school maintains a successful special refugee support program for students from Sudanese, Burmese and Cambodian backgrounds and has close links with Maroondah Network Schools and local agencies to provide relevant programs for English as a Second Language and refugee students.

Currently we have 6 students supported by the Program for Students with Disabilities, 5 Koorie students, 13 refugee students and 20 Facility students.

There is a traditional class (prep to grade 6) structure with multi-age classes allowing for flexible grouping of students and the successful inclusion and integration of students with hearing impairments. There are five school teaching teams (Levels 1 to 4 and Specialists), and three Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) teams led by members of the leadership team which reflect the work within this Strategic Plan

- Student learning;
- Student engagement and wellbeing, and
- Student pathways and transitions.

There is a strong information and communication technology (ICT) focus across the school with the majority of classes having Interactive Whiteboards which were installed in 2008. Students and teachers use a wide variety of software and hardware as a natural part of learning and teaching.

Student leadership is fostered at all year levels and includes School Captains and Vice Captains, class elected Junior School Council, House Captains, and Specialist Area

Captains. Student voice is highly valued with many opportunities for students to participate in authentic activities.

Parent expectations of the school are high. Parents are involved in a wide range of school activities including fund raising, gardening, class assistance and special school activities. The School Council maintains an active involvement across the school and effectively supports school programs in the following sub-committees: Finance, Education and Policy, Futures, Environment, Eastwood Community Connections Organisation and Health/Nutrition/Traffic.

Eastwood is proudly a community school and actively supports the utilisation of school facilities by a range of groups. Recent discussions between School Council and the City of Maroondah present a range of opportunities for collaboration in the future. The school enjoys excellent community support which is exemplified by the Chaplaincy Program and student mentoring offered by the Ringwood Church of Christ.

Eastwood maintains close links with its feeder pre-schools and with its key feeder school, Ringwood Secondary College. Close links with Aurora, and Maroondah, Forest Hill and Banksia Secondary Colleges ensure ongoing support for students in the Deaf Facility and refugee students.

The following Strategic Intent will guide improvements to Student Learning, Engagement/Wellbeing and Pathways/Transitions for the years 2009 – 2010. The preparation of the plan was done with considerable community input. Student, parent, and teacher forums contributed most effectively at both the review and planning stage providing valuable insights which were used to develop the Strategic Intent. The Goals, Targets and Key Improvement Strategies were recommended by the independent Reviewer with only minor adjustments made to accommodate information available from newly released data sets.

Staff Annual Implementation Plan teams led by the school leadership team, developed the Actions, Indicative Planner and Achievement Milestones taking into account our local context and capacity for change ensuring appropriate timelines were established that will enable new learning to be embedded in practice.

Within the life of this plan Eastwood will work collaboratively with all other State Government Schools in the Maroondah Network to improve learning outcomes for all students. This is considerably new work for the Victorian education system and Eastwood is well placed to learn from, and support the learning of, network colleagues. Eastwood has particularly strong professional learning links with Heathmont East PS, Ringwood Nth PS and Ringwood SC through the Ringwood Cluster, ongoing work will be further strengthened by the new network model.

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility is a place:

- To build foundation skills for Learning - Literacy, Numeracy, Thinking and Learning Skills.
- To understand who we are and how we relate to each other. We seek to build relationships, values and sense of belonging to local, national & global communities.
- To develop skills and knowledge for life in an information and technology rich world.
- To develop environmental skills, knowledge and behaviours in an ever changing world.

For Deaf and Hearing Impaired students to access quality mainstream education in a supportive environment.

2 Whole-School Prevention Statement

Purpose

We come to the safe and friendly environment of Eastwood PS to achieve our academic potential in positive, challenging and vibrant learning spaces. Eastwood embraces diversity and seeks to build community; ensuring we become responsible members of the global society.

At Eastwood we Value

- **Learning:** At Eastwood we value confident, motivated and responsible life long learners.
- **Self:** We aim to help create positive empowered and compassionate individuals who participate fully in life.
- **Relationships:** We value lifelong, positive, and respectful relationships with all members of our school community, our environment and the global community.

Eastwood Primary School's community desires to further enhance relationships through the introduction of a whole school social and emotional literacy program. This will be achieved through:

- Improving student behaviour- continue building positive relationships and empathy between staff and students. *If we introduce a whole school social and emotional literacy program then relationships would be enhanced leading to improved student wellbeing.*
- Further enhancing "student voice" and leadership. *If students are given more opportunity to participate in decision making regarding their learning and environment then connectedness to school will improve.*
- Improve student behaviour management practices. *If we improve behaviour management practices and ensure they are implemented consistently and rigorously then student misbehaviour will reduce.*

Within the school structure we have a clearly articulated Student Wellbeing and Engagement practice. Our approach includes whole school, small groups of children and individual students. It is broken into Primary Prevention and Early Intervention and Restoration. In each of these areas we have a number of strategies.

Primary Prevention and Early intervention

These programs which are directed at the whole school include:

- PATHS, A social and emotional literacy program from Prep to Grade 6;
- Circle Time;
- Restorative approach to relationships within the school;
- Eastwood actively supports the "It's Not OK to be Away" program.

Intervention

These programs are for small groups of children and include:

- The Oasis program;
- Restorative chats;
- Social Intervention programs such as KKPP, MPower, Revved Up;
- Artist in Residence programs.

Intervention and Restoration

These programs are designed for individuals in the school community

- Chaplaincy;
- Social Worker;
- Kids Hope Mentors;
- Guidance Officer/Educational Psychologist;
- Use of outside agencies such as Anglicare, Centacare, Child First and DHS.

Improvements have come about largely through the following initiatives that Eastwood Primary School has put into place. These have all allowed students to have an active part in their school life and to build strong relationships with their peers and teachers.

- **Wellbeing and Engagement Team**

This team was formalised in 2007 and began to develop strategic approaches to students Wellbeing in response to the various sets of data gained through parent, student and teachers surveys. These approaches became the framework for the Strategic Plan and the Annual Implementation Plan.

- **Building Positive Relationships**

Continued building of circle time into the weekly curriculum enabling students to raise issues and find solutions. When relationships were harmed due to misbehaviour a restorative approach was used to rebuild connections and learn important life lessons. Training continued with the staff to develop positive relationship building skills.

- **Reflection Time**

There has been a continued fall in the number of students who were involved in Reflection Time. A combination of the restorative approach to issues and the traditional approach were used to respond to issues in the yard. Towards the end of 2009 greater emphasis was on responding restoratively.

- **Kids Hope**

We had 10 students and mentors involved in this program with all the trained mentors coming from Ringwood Church of Christ. The end of year was celebrated with a picnic at Ringwood Lake with all the mentors, children and many family members participating.

- **Friendship Groups**

Two friendship groups were run for students who needed added support to develop positive social skills. These were run weekly for 10 weeks. There was a group for junior students and another for senior and middle school children.

- **Junior School Council**

Students have regular meetings to give voice to their opinions and ideas. Students are encouraged to discuss issues and to provide and carry out solutions. They are also actively engaged in organising activities for the other students. The school leaders met weekly with the principal.

- **Chaplaincy**

The Chaplain has continued providing widespread support to all members of the Eastwood Community. The Chaplain has continued to build and strengthen positive relationships with students across the school and regularly participates in excursions, whole school events and day-to-day activities around the school. Support has been allocated on the basis of parent, staff or student request. The presence of the Chaplain, be it in the playground, school camp or working with an individual, adds a positive dimension to our pastoral care and student wellbeing.

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. The Eastwood Primary School community has an established Code of Practice which sets out expectations for students and adults which guides the development of learning, respect for others and self responsibility.

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 or their age.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. While the Charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The Charter affirms that all people are born equal in dignity and rights. The Charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees to act compatibly with human rights and to consider them when making decisions and delivering services. 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.

All members of Eastwood Primary School have a right to:

- Fully participate in an environment free of discriminatory behaviour – including racist, sexist, ability-based, class-based and homophobic forms of harassment, bullying (including cyber bullying), vilification, violence, intimidation, abuse and exclusion;
- Be treated with respect and dignity;
- Feel valued, safe and supported in an environment that encourages freedom of thought and expression.

All members of Eastwood Primary School have a responsibility to:

- Acknowledge their obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* 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 supports the learning of self and others;
- Ensure their actions and views do not impact on the health and wellbeing of other members of our community.

All students have the right to:

- Learn and socialise without interference or intimidation in a safe and secure environment;
- Be treated with respect, kindness and fairness as individuals;
- Expect a learning program that meets their individual needs;
- Enjoy their learning;
- Achieve success as an individual.

All students have a responsibility to:

- Be prepared to learn;
- Explore their full potential;
- Respect the rights of others;
- Respect the property and the school environment.

All staff has the right to:

- Expect to be able to work in an atmosphere of order and cooperation;
- Use discretion in the application of rules and consequences;
- Receive respect and support from the school;
- To work in a safe environment.

All staff has a responsibility to:

- Build positive relationships with students as basis for engagement and learning;
- use and manage the resources of the school to create stimulating, safe and meaningful learning;
- Treat all members of Eastwood's community with respect, fairness and dignity.

All parents have a right to:

- Know that their children are in a safe, happy learning environment where they are treated fairly and with respect;
- Expect a positive and supportive approach to their child's learning;
- Expect communication and participation in their child's education and learning.

All parents have a responsibility to:

- Build positive relationships with members of the school community;
- Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials;
- Promote respectful relationships.

Bullying

Under no circumstances will physical, verbal or emotional bullying be tolerated. All members of the school community have an obligation to report bullying so action can be taken.

Eastwood's Student Code of Conduct also acknowledges the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001, which supports racial and religious tolerance and prohibits vilification on the ground of race and religion.

This code also acknowledges that bullying can be carried on through cyberspace. This includes the use of email, chat rooms, discussion groups or messages.

Examples of cyber bullying include teasing, spreading rumours online, sending unwanted messages, or defamation. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS), photos or movies.

If you are being harassed or bullied you should:

- Tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop;
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that you feel comfortable with;
- Discuss the matter with the principal.

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

4. Shared Expectations

Schools – Principals, Teachers and School Staff

Schools have 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.

Eastwood's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

- **Care and Compassion**
Care for self and others.
- **Integrity**
Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds.
- **Doing Your Best**
Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence.
- **Respect**
Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view.
- **Fair Go**
Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society.

- **Responsibility**
Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment.
- **Freedom**
Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others.
- **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion**
Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others.
- **Honesty and Trustworthiness**
Be honest, sincere and seek the truth.

School expectations include:

- Inclusive teaching practices;
- Accessible educational provision for all students;
- Parent/carer communication;
- Community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success;
- Provision of appropriate student services;
- Development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

Restorative Practices

The school is committed to the use of Restorative Practices with students. Restorative Practices:

- Are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness.
- Promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy.
- Involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution.
- Promote relationship management rather than behaviour management.
- Separate the deed from the doer.
- Are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied.

Diversity in the school community

The school aims to address diversity by:

- Maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community.
- Attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer.
- Increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce.
- Enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater

diversity of perspectives and inputs.

- Creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

5. School Actions and Consequences

Eastwood Primary School provides targeted support to enable students to develop skills to change their behaviour. This allows the student to be skilled with alternative positive choices for their behaviour. Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments;
- Ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations;
- Providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students;
- Consistently acknowledging all students;
- Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making;
- Providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning.

If students do not comply with conduct codes through deliberate action, consequences will apply. These will be fairly, reasonably and consistently implemented and teachers will be encouraged to draw on the support of colleagues as appropriate.

The following guidelines will apply to the application of consequences:

- Consequences are not to be imposed until it is reasonably certain a student understands and is capable of the appropriate conduct. Where the judgement is made that a student does not understand the conduct code for a particular situation, appropriate counselling and encouragement will be provided.
- The initial consequence in the great majority of cases, will involve counselling in the form of discussion about the infringements caused by inappropriate behaviour.
- Consequences must relate logically to the inappropriate behaviour in nature and degree.
- The connection between behaviour and consequence will be stressed to develop accountability and self discipline.
- Beyond counselling, consequences will extend to include contact with and support from parents and teachers, make-up time to complete work, time out, withdrawal of privileges or detention. A Support Group may be formed in the event of persistent misbehaviour. The school may seek advice from external consultants.
- In the most severe cases of misbehaviour, or persistent misbehaviour, or an act that seriously threatens or harms the safety of others, children can be suspended or expelled by the Principal in accordance with section 4 of the DEECD guidelines published in *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools*

Guidelines Policy Guidelines 2009. Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures. Conferences and reviews will be conducted as appropriate, to consider options for suspended or expelled students.

A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn, or is a threat to their own or others safety, or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.
- Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals.
- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.
- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

Broader support strategies may include:

- Involving the student wellbeing coordinator
- Tutoring/peer tutoring
- Developing individualised learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- Involving community support agencies.

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/earningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf
School Policies and Procedures	S:\Staff\Policies\2009 Anti-Bullying Policy.doc S:\Staff\Policies\2007 OHS Policy.doc S:\Staff\Policies\STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT.doc S:\Staff\Policies\chaplaincy policy.doc S:\Staff\Policies\ESL Aim and objectives.doc