



Somerville Primary School Engagement Policy

Policy Name:	Engagement Policy	Date of approval:	2015
Responsible:	Well-Being Committee	Expected review date:	2018

1. Somerville Primary School Profile Statement

Somerville Primary School is one of two Government primary schools serving the semi-rural town of Somerville, situated about 55 kilometres southeast of Melbourne, on the Mornington Peninsula. Currently there are 253 students enrolled. The school is organised into a mixture of straight and multi-aged grades divided into Junior (prep to year 2) and Senior (year 3 to year 6) Units. Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Music, Science, Health and Physical Education are specialist programs at the school. Somerville Primary prides itself on its welcoming atmosphere and valuing all in the school community. These qualities have made it a school of choice by many families outside the school's traditional feeder area.

Somerville Primary School aims to develop socially well-adjusted children who perform academically to the best of their ability in a vibrant and engaging atmosphere. They are equipped with skills and knowledge to become valued members of the global society. We aim to develop literacy and numeracy outcomes across all areas of the school through improved curriculum planning in line with VELs. We have a focus on improving student connectedness to school, particularly for students in Years 5 & 6 and improving student transition from home/kindergarten to school, into a new sub-school and from primary to secondary school.

2. Preventative School Culture

The foundation of our positive school culture is the active participation of all members of the school community so they feel valued, safe and secure; are provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school; and have every opportunity to meet their personal and educational potential. A key component of Somerville Primary School's approach to prevention is teaching positive behaviours and the use of logical consequences to address appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Somerville Primary School's Council and Consultative Team regularly meet to consider the school community and to ensure we are responsive to all students' social, emotional, cognitive and cultural needs. Parent Opinion and Student's Attitude to School's Surveys along with other surveys provide necessary feedback for future well-being direction.

Student involvement in decision making is encouraged through participation in classroom discussions and school student leadership meetings. Students have opportunities to have input into the creation of their educational experience, including their physical learning environment, which provides a sense of ownership and encourages them to feel safe and supported within that environment.

Somerville Primary School continues to build opportunities for students to take on meaningful responsibilities within the school and encourage participation within the broader community.

Our positive school culture is reliant on student engagement being the basis for learning. To support this the Somerville Primary School staff is actively engaged in developing classroom practice to ensure that our teaching, learning and curriculum, engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse learning needs. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff and students is promoted through learning circles and professional learning teams that encourage innovative teaching and learning developed through investigative and inquiry learning, while making use of AUSVELS.

Prevention Programs

You Can Do It

The concepts and shared values of this program underpin the whole school culture. Concepts are embedded in our curriculum and, along with our school values help to consolidate Somerville Primary School's environment.

Somerville Primary School Shared Values

COURAGE

Definition: To act confidently

Behaviours:

- Voice your opinions in different forums
- Trial new ideas
- Persist and be flexible in your beliefs
- Ask for assistance as required
- Accept a challenge

HONESTY

Definition: To be truthful to yourself and others.

Behaviours:

- Being confident and resilient enough to say what you really think
- Knowing what is right in a particular situation
- Being explicit in expectations
- Being able to say how you feel
- Owning up to what you have/haven't done
- Speaking out respectfully if you disagree with others' opinions
- Being truthful without hurting individuals or the group.

RESPECT

Definition: To acknowledge individuals with courtesy.

Behaviours:

- Genuinely listen to and respond courteously to others.
- Showing no discrimination
- Making sure to acknowledge others upon meeting.
- Being thoughtful of others' feelings and values

TRUST

Definition: To rely on and have faith in others.

Behaviours:

- Accepting that information given is correct
- Having the expectation that your opinion will be valued and listened to
- Being confident that decisions made are in the best interests of the group
- Acknowledging the expectation that tasks allocated will be completed diligently
- Keeping confidentiality

RESPONSIBILITY

Definition: To be accountable for your actions.

Behaviours:

- Acknowledging and being aware of individual duties
- Ensuring that tasks will be completed successfully and on time to the best of your ability
- Offering support to others
- Accepting the consequences of your actions

School Rules

Everyone has the right to learn without disruption.

Everyone has the right to be treated with courtesy.

Everyone has the right to feel safe.

Attendance

Somerville Primary School understands that full attendance is a key to engagement and maximises every student's ability to learn, and our teacher's ability to instruct effectively. Somerville Primary School has actively embraced the 'It's Not Okay To Be Away' approach and has an Attendance Policy that monitors and responds to student attendance in an effective and efficient manner. (See Appendix)

Literacy and Numeracy Emphasis

Somerville Primary School has developed and introduced intervention and extension programs. As a whole school approach, Somerville is using an investigative and inquiry based learning to support and extend students in all areas of the educational spectrum.

Chaplaincy

Somerville Primary School has a chaplain who assists and supports with welfare and problem solving for students and family members of our school population.

Inclusion, Wellbeing and Transition

Somerville Primary School has formal transition programs for Kindergarten, grade 2s and grade 6s to aid transition to the next level of schooling, addressing expectations and providing positive school experiences for all children. All students are given the opportunity to participate in a transition session at the end of the school year in preparation for the following year.

Other Programs:

SHINE, Sports Challenge, Healthy Active Mornington, Dance Program, Specialist subjects, Fitness Club, Buddy Grades

Professional Learning

Exploration of Restorative Practices

Exploration of mental health programs and resources (Friends For Life, Kids Matters – Social and Emotional Learning)

Exploration of investigative and inquiry learning to promote further educational engagement.

Support of Positive Behaviour and Relationships

Somerville Primary School believes that education is a shared responsibility and requires the active involvement of parents in the learning and behaviour of each student. It seeks to foster this cooperative approach with parents through reports, parent-teacher interviews, phone-calls, meetings and diaries.

Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices is a part of Somerville Primary School's student resolution process. This process encourages engagement, builds confidence, respect and responsibility in each individual student in the classroom and in the playground.

In encouraging and building this cooperative approach, it is acknowledged there will be behaviours, events and issues that compromise this ideal. When this occurs, Somerville Primary School will use a restorative practices approach and 'circle time' to repair damaged relationships between individuals and groups. The following restorative practices approach will be introduced and adopted:

A restorative practices approach:

When things go wrong	When someone has been hurt
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happened?• What were you thinking at the time?• What have you thought about since?• Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?• What do you think you need to do to make things right?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you think when you realised what had happened?• What impact has this incident had on you and others?• What has been the hardest thing for you?• What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

A Staged Response

1. The first approach will be conducted in an informal way for minor incidents and be embedded in classroom teaching and learning. Incidents will be tracked in the Incident section of the Sentral system used at Somerville Primary School.

2. Serious incidents will require a more formal restorative session that involves the assistant principal/principal and all persons affected in the incident and will be documented.
3. There will be situations where a formal conference involving assistant principal/principal, parents, support personnel and those affected by the incident will be required. Any consequence will be imbedded in the restorative practices process that requires a response 'that makes things right' in relation to those who have been affected.
4. Where a restorative approach has previously been conducted and subsequently the behaviour continues, the school will convene a Student Support Group meeting to devise strategies and approaches to address the behaviour; this may include intervention from specialist services and external agencies in the local community.

The Restorative Practices approach is intended to move the focus away from punitive consequence. Rather it seeks to value and support those involved, so that they feel empowered to take positive action to address the situation and move forward. Restorative practices is about being respectful of every member of our school community, encouraging responsible behaviour and actions, and ensuring that personal pride and dignity is maintained.

School Strategic Plan

Somerville Primary School's Strategic Plan identifies the context and strategic intent of the next three years. Goals are identified under the Intents of Student Learning, Student Engagement & Wellbeing and Student Pathways and Transitions.

Annual Improvement Plan

Somerville Primary School's Annual Improvement Plan identifies the context and strategic intent from year to year. Goals are identified under the context of the School Strategic Plan and addressed more specifically as benchmarks from year to year.

3a. Right and Responsibilities - Basis

As a result of numerous data sources (student, staff and parent opinion surveys; student, staff and parent wellbeing surveys; Sports Challenge – Student Self Esteem surveys and follow up, behaviour tracking database), it can be deduced that the school community, as a whole, is not fully aware of what constitutes wellbeing and engagement. Somerville Primary School endeavours to promote mental health and wellbeing standards throughout the curriculum and general school culture. Development of investigative and inquiry based learning pedagogy will support an effort to further develop engagement across the school body.

3b. Right and Responsibilities – Fundamentals

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 1995 (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 government schools and their employees to act compatibly with human rights and to consider them when making decisions.

All Members of Somerville Primary School community have a right to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully participate in an environment free of discriminatory behaviour-including racist, sexist, ability based, class based, religious based and homophobic forms of harassment, 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 Somerville Primary School community have a responsibility to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 the members of the school community 		
All students have the right to:	All staff have the right to:	All parents have the right to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn and socialise without interference or intimidation in a safe and secure environment • Be treated with respect and fairness as individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in an atmosphere of order and cooperation • Use discretion in the application of rules and consequences • Receive respect and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect a learning program that meets their individual needs 	from the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect communication and participation in their child's education and learning
All students have a responsibility to:	All staff have a responsibility to:	All parents have a responsibility to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be prepared to learn Explore their full potential Respect the rights of others 	<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, fairness and dignity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build positive relationships with members of the school community Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials Promote respectful relationships

Bullying and Cyber Bullying

Somerville Primary School has a clear direction to deal with bullying at school as indicated through the policies.

(See Appendix)

4. Shared Expectations

Somerville Primary School has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive in that they set out what are expected and appropriate behaviours for our school community. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.

The values of Somerville Primary School are demonstrated by our values as listed above.

Expectations of Staff

Somerville Primary School Leadership team will:

- Uphold the right of every child to receive an education
- Ensure the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligation under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation
- Collaborate with the Victorian Primary School community to develop policies and procedures consistent with its values and aspirations and the Department's Guidelines
- Collaborate to 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.

Somerville Primary School teachers and other staff will:

- Develop flexible teaching and learning styles to engage all learners
- Deliver 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 involvement in decision making, developing a positive school culture in and outside the classroom

Attendance

In compliance with Departmental procedures Somerville Primary School staff will:-

- Promote regular, 'on time' attendance with all members of the school community
- Monitor and follow up on lateness and absences as per Attendance Policy

Behaviour

Somerville Primary School will support and promote positive behaviours by developing and implementing shared behavioural expectations with the school community, and by delivering a whole-school response and approach to behavioural issues. All members of the school community are expected to participate in the educational environment with curiosity, enthusiasm and mutual respect. Somerville Primary School is committed to engaging all students and will only exclude students as a matter of last resort in extreme circumstances.

The Somerville Primary School Leadership team will:

- Lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues by incorporating student wellbeing at the centre of school business
- Monitor the profile of behaviour issues at the school and the effectiveness of implemented strategies
- Provide appropriate professional development opportunities for all staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours

Somerville Primary School teachers and other staff will:

- Use the Student Engagement policy as a basis for negotiating a class-based set of shared expectations with students
- Teach students social competencies through curriculum content, and the teaching and learning approach
- Employ behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviours expected from students and which focus on supporting positive behaviours
- Build a collegiate atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and support each other to reflect on one's own behaviour management approach
- Involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary

Expectations of Students

All students are expected to:

- Respect, value and learn from the differences of others
- Have high expectations that they can learn
- Reflect on and learn from their own differences

Attendance

All students are expected to come to school every day that the school is open to students. If students can't come, they must provide an explanation from their parents/carers to their teacher. Students should be aware of the attendance policy ([See Appendix](#)) and should arrive at each class on time and ready to learn.

Behaviour

Students are expected to:

- Support each other's learning by behaving in a way that is curious and respectful
- Have high expectations that they can learn
- Be considerate and supportive of others
- Demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contribute to a positive school environment that is safe, inclusive and happy
- Understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable
- Be aware of, and act in accordance to the school's behaviour management policy ([See Appendix](#))

Expectations of Parents/Carers:

- Parents/carers are expected to support the school's efforts to educate young people to live in a diverse community by promoting an understanding and appreciation of diversity in the home
- Parents/carers should help the school to provide student-centred responses by providing all relevant information to the school
- Parents/carers are expected to actively participate in supporting their child's learning by building positive relationships with Somerville Primary School through attendance at student-parent-teacher meetings, student activities, school celebrations, student support groups and responding to communications in a timely manner.

Attendance

Parents/carers are expected to ensure that enrolment details for their children are correct, that their children attend school regularly and that, when a child is absent from school, parents/carers advise the school as soon as possible.

Behaviour

Parents/carers should understand Somerville Primary School’s behavioural expectations and work with the school to promote a consistent approach that supports their child’s learning, engagement and endeavour, both in and out of school.

5. Actions and Consequences

Appropriate Behaviour

Somerville Primary School acknowledges students who meet the shared expectations outlined in this policy through recognition and encouragement.

Inappropriate Behaviour

When students do not meet these expectations, a staged response is implemented consistent with logical consequences outlined below. This is to be implemented using restorative practices and summarized as following:

The restorative approach is used to address student behaviour in various settings and levels to:

- Re-establish significant relationships
- Ensure consequences for misbehaviour are relevant and meaningful
- Foster and develop individual responsibility and empathy

Logical Consequences

Appropriate Behaviour	Inappropriate Behaviour
<p>Appropriate behaviour will be recognised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration at assemblies • Reports • References • Newsletters • Leadership opportunities • Scholarships • Positive feedback • The right to represent the school • Award nights • Verbal praise from staff 	<p>Inappropriate behaviour will be recognised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking to the student and referring them to the shared expectations • Discussing appropriate behaviours in the classroom • Contacting parents • Making changes to the student’s learning program to better equip him/her to behave positively • Implementing restorative practices • Conferencing: Apology • Action to ‘make it right’ agreed too (may include clean up damage to property) • Asking the student to undertake tasks designed to better equip him/her to behave positively in the future • Counselling • Appropriate behaviours taught and agreed • Payment for damage sought • Withdrawal of privileges • Withdrawal of student temporarily from class • Holding student support group meetings • Giving the student a time out • Negotiating alternate pathways or settings for students • Suspension or expulsion

Ongoing Behaviour Issues

Where students exhibit ongoing behaviour patterns: as part of staged response, a range of strategies will be used. They may include:

- **Discussing** the behaviour problems and reaching an agreement for future behaviour
- **Explicit Teaching of** appropriate behaviour
- **Monitoring and providing feedback**-communication book/diary
- **Time Out allowing** students a ‘Cooling Off’ period
- **Withdrawal** - A student may be withdrawn from an activity, class, camp, incursion or excursion due to

inappropriate behaviour and provided with an alternative educational program within the school in consultation with the welfare team, administration and parents/carers.

- **Counselling** for individuals in order to modify inappropriate behaviour
- **Discipline/Student Support Group Meeting** involving parents/carers and or relevant DEECD support staff, outside agencies to assist with modifying behaviour
- **Time Out** will be given to a student for serious and /or continual misconduct. Time Out will be taken and carer/parents will receive notification as per the “Time Out Protocol”
- **Suspension and Expulsion:** For serious disciplinary measures Somerville PS will follow DEECD Engaging Schools are Effective Schools: Student Engagement Policy guidelines 2009 developed in response to Ministerial Order No 184.



**HONESTY TRUST
COURAGE RESPONSIBILITY
RESPECT**