Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy

Produced in consultation with the VSL community

To be read in conjunction with

*Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

Principal: Frank Merlino
School Council President: Dr. Bruno Mascitelli
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Introduction

Definition
Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components: cognitive, emotional and behavioural.

Cognitive engagement relates to a student’s investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. Emotional engagement encompasses students’ emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a student’s sense of belonging or connectedness to the school. Behavioural engagement refers to students’ participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.

Rationale
The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to providing safe, secure and high quality learning and development opportunities for every student in all Victorian schools. These students can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture that is fair and respectful to engage and support their learning.

Purpose
To relate to and be consistent with the ‘Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines’, in areas such as

- the encouragement of educational achievement and excellence, prevention of absences and inappropriate behaviour
- fostering a healthy school culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment through engagement
- providing students with a safe learning environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure
- providing support for individual circumstances when a student begins to disengage from their learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated
- maximising student learning opportunities and performance through engagement
• providing genuine opportunities for student/parent(s)/carer(s) participation and student/parent voice

• building a school environment based on positive behaviours and values

• providing cognitive, behavioural and emotional prevention and intervention for all students at risk.
1. SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT

The Victorian School of Languages (VSL) is a government school and complimentary provider in the state of Victoria, Australia, founded in 1935. It has a culturally diverse population of over 15,000 students including 1,400 distance education students. It has a strong history of commitment to the provision of language programmes for students in Years 1 to 12 who do not have access to the study of such languages in their mainstream schools. The school’s language programme is delivered through face-to-face teaching in 40 language centres across the State and through Distance Education mode. The VSL Head Office is located in Thornbury, Melbourne. The current Principal is Frank Merlino.

The Victorian School of Languages offers 45 languages around Victoria to 14,500 students in up to 689 face-to-face classes and 10 languages to 1,500 students in distance education. The school is the largest single Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) language provider with over 4,000 VCE students. For many languages the VSL is the only provider through to VCE level.

The Victorian School of Languages students are drawn from the three school sectors (State – approximately 70%, Independent – approximately 20% and Catholic – approximately 10%). The VSL also caters for a number of adults and overseas students.

The Victorian School of Languages is also a Registered Training Organization (RTO) which is able to deliver nationally recognized Vocational Education and Training (VET) certificate courses. As an RTO the school can also tailor face-to-face courses to suit individual corporations or community groups.

The Victorian School of Languages is at the forefront of language teaching. Due to its single faculty language focus, the VSL has a high concentration of expertise and is well placed to offer quality, innovative language programs. A common curriculum rationale, methodological approach and organisational focus as defined in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) forms the basis of the development of individual syllabi and teaching materials.
Victorian School of Languages
VISION and VALUES

Vision Statement
The school will provide an educational environment which is safe, challenging and encourages excellence in LOTE teaching and learning. It will endeavour to reflect positive community values and welcomes community input.

Respecting language learning
- Fostering greater intellectual awareness and a respect for all languages
- A commitment to students from all communities and socio-economic backgrounds to study a language of their choice
- Pursuing excellence in language learning

Valuing cultural diversity
- A strong sense of community and teamwork which embraces diversity acceptance and respect for all communities
- Valuing our diversity including our diverse cultural heritages and diverse ways of functioning in a multi-cultural global community
- Exploring diverse ways of understanding thinking and learning
- Supporting students to maintain and value their own cultural identity

Creating a sense of pride in linguistic achievements
- Working cooperatively and collaboratively with the school community
- Being reflective and continually seeking to improve
- To develop and maintain a harmonious and tolerant school which respects and values the contribution made by people of different cultures and backgrounds

Developing student well-being
- Developing resilience, self confidence and a sense of personal pride and identity
- Each person being valued and respected
- Embracing responsibilities as local, national and global citizens

Leading to
- Contented and fulfilled individuals with a strong sense of self
- A tolerant and respectful attitude towards all individuals
- A respect for all cultures in the school community and in the workplace
Results in

a sense of self worth and improved self expression via the study of another language

Measured by

Continued growth of the school with the establishment of more languages and centres and social cohesion demonstrated by minimal adverse events
The Victorian School of Languages curriculum provides for its students a balanced set of learning experiences which are active, cooperative and participatory and which give students maximum opportunity to realise their potential. Curriculum development is based on the communicative approach to language teaching, aimed at the intellectual, social, emotional and creative development of all students and is inclusive of gender, ability and background. Learning tasks and assessment practices are structured in such a way that student progress is measurable and so that participating students are enabled and encouraged to perform well. All courses are reviewed to ensure compatibility with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and VCE.

In addition, the Victorian School of Languages has an International Student Program, comprising of around 700 students from China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Korea, Sri Lanka and India, which provides a further global perspective. Our international student cohort is highly valued for the role they play in the promotion of intercultural diversity. The school is strongly committed to the continuation of the program and its ongoing role in supporting the development of a truly global learning community.

The VCE students at the Victorian School of Languages have consistently achieved excellent VCE results, with the great majority of students routinely entering the tertiary education sector. In 2009, 176 VSL students were classed as ‘top achievers’ by obtaining scores between 40 and 50. 21 students topped the State in their respective languages and of these, three students achieved a perfect score of 50 – two in French and one in Vietnamese.

To be a safe and effective school, the Victorian School of Languages has encompassed a whole school approach that focuses on safety and wellbeing throughout all school practices. This is based on the eight characteristics contained in the effective school model, which underpins all Blueprint for Government Schools (DOE, 2003) strategies.

The above approach to developing and sustaining innovation in learning embeds the principles of the DEECD Effective Schools Model upon which the school has based its growth, referenced its work and measured its progress. A focus on continual improvement in the quality of teaching and learning has been the core school priority around which the other attributes of the effective schools model interact in order to achieve the deep learning outcomes being sought for students and teachers.

**Professional leadership:** a commitment to a shared and well developed vision of a safe, caring, respectful, supportive and inclusive school community sends a clear message that bullying in all forms is unacceptable. Students are more likely to behave positively and treat each other well when staff and student teams model respectful and caring interactions.

**Focus on teaching and learning:** teachers need to develop and refresh skills that enable them to work collaboratively in creating and maintaining a safe, caring, respectful and supporting school culture. Staff also need to develop skills in non-punitive approaches to discipline matters.
**Purposeful teaching**: a safe and effective school employs relationship-based pedagogy such as cooperative learning and problem based learning. It contributes to student achievement and positive peer relationships.

**Shared visions and goals**: clear, well defined and agreed expectations of acceptable types of behaviour is a starting point that allows all members of the school community to have a shared understanding of unacceptable or bullying behaviour. Teachers need to intervene firmly and swiftly to manage any discipline matters. Structured activities in class as well as vigilant yard supervision will help monitor unacceptable behaviour.

**High expectation of all learners**: diversity is valued and everyone should be treated with respect, fairness and dignity. Members of the school community need to clearly communicate that everybody has the right to feel physically and psychologically safe and ensure that safety is everyone’s responsibility.

**Accountability**: teachers need to provide students a variety of ways to communicate their need for support.

**Learning communities**: staff need to collaborate to implement the procedures to strengthen the quality of relationships between people, build empathy and work cooperatively. They should develop structures in their classes based on peer support, authentic student leadership and student ownership.

**Stimulating and secure learning environments**: a strong and consistent whole school behaviour management system should be in place. Students should be encouraged to develop readiness especially in new situations so as to reduce anxiety and increase resilience.
2. WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT

At the Victorian School of Languages, our positive school culture is predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning, both for distance learning and face to face centre classes. To support this, our leadership team is actively engaged in developing classroom practices to ensure that our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students. Effective teaching, inclusive and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between members of the school community is promoted through learning circles and professional learning teams that encourage innovative pedagogy developed using the Departments Effective Schools Model, E5 Instructional Model, VELS, and Students Engagement Policy Guidelines.

The opportunities that contribute to the school’s level of student engagement are:
- Greater student access to IT;
- Intensive 2 day workshop for Distance Education languages;
- City based seminars for Distance Education students;
- Student conferences for students to share their goals and reflections – Parent/Teacher Report Interviews;
- Use of Portfolios;
- Use of POLT Surveys in centres;
- Student Code of Conduct;
- Drug Education Policy;
- Cultural Awareness Tours;
- Use of centralised database to record and interpret baseline data for student attendance figures.

WHOLE SCHOOL VALUES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Discovering new ways to improve language knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Learning means;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Challenging yourself to try new cultural experiences</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Being positive when mistakes are made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>An attitude of admiration and esteem for all cultures</td>
<td>Respect means;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Being a proactive listener, being considerate, preserving dignity and understanding and appreciating other opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Working with others as a team to promote intercultural awareness</td>
<td>Cooperation means;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Encouraging others, negotiating and compromising as a member of a language class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Looking after yourself and being considerate of the multicultural perspective</td>
<td>Caring means;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Considering other people's feelings and safety, helping people, showing appreciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Being truthful</td>
<td>Honesty means;</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Telling the truth, owning up to decisions, behaviours, actions and mistakes, sharing thoughts and feelings with trusted people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Making good decisions in a multicultural setting</td>
<td>Responsibility means;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Being punctual and organized for school, following instructions and directions, accepting consequences of decisions and actions</td>
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</tbody>
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**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Victorian School of Languages does not obtain funding for a disability/integration aid. Parents of students with disabilities who wish to attend centre classes must contact their day school and negotiate a special arrangement with their respective regions. Individual learning plans will be negotiated between student, parent and centre staff.
e5 Instructional Model

Engage
- Foster positive relationships
- Develop shared expectations
- Stimulate interest and curiosity
- Promote questioning
- Connect learning to real world experiences
- Determine learning goals
- Identify assessment methods and targets

Explore
- Challenging tasks
- Investigative questioning
- Gathering information
- Organisation of ideas
- Expand perspectives
- Reflect on learning

Explain
- Demonstrate level of understanding
- Explicitly teach knowledge & skills
- Connect and organise knowledge
- Use language and images to represent ideas

Evaluate
- Continuously refine and improve work
- Formally record progress
- Provide positive feedback
- Evaluate achievements
- Reflect on learning processes
- Reflect on impact of effort
- Identify future learning goals

Elaborate
- Extend and refine understanding
- Identify and define conceptual relationships
- Create and test hypothesis
- Make and justify decisions
- Provide explicit feedback
- Adjust instruction accordingly
School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

**Initial Prevention:**

School and classroom wide prevention for students, staff and settings
- Restorative practices
- Student engagement policy guidelines
- Leadership programs
- Community initiatives and programs

**Intermediate Prevention:**

Individual Group prevention for students with at-risk behaviour
- Restorative practices
- Positive behaviour support
- Personal counselling

**Tertiary Prevention:**

Specialised individualised prevention for students with high-risk behaviour
- Restorative practices
- Positive behaviour support
- Referral to external agencies and services
Indicators of Effective Practice

Instructional Model

Restorative Practices

Engagement Guidelines

Positive Behaviour Support

VELS

Student Pre-Referral Process
3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasis’s 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 and delivering services.

All Victorian School of Languages community members have the right to participate in a learning environment which is safe, supportive, and inclusive of their individual needs. All school members are to be treated with respect and dignity in an environment which promotes positive relationships values diversity and supports the learning of all students.

The following legislation needs to be considered when determining rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community:

1. **The Equal Opportunity Act 1995**
   This act 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.

2. **The Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006**
   This charter 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 human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

3. **The Disability Discrimination Act 1992**
   The standards clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Disability Discriminations Act. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

4. **The Education Training & Reform Act 2006**
   All providers of education and training, both Government and non-Government, must ensure that their programs and teaching are delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to: elected Government; the rule of law, equal rights for all before the law; freedom of religions; freedom of speech and association; and the values of openness and tolerance.

5. **Bullying and Harassment**
The Victorian School of Languages does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. Bullying/harassment/discrimination occurs when any member of the school community is subjected to behaviour which is hurtful, threatening or frightening. Bullying/harassment/discrimination can occur between any member of the school community:
- student to student
- teacher to student
- student to teacher
- teacher to teacher

There are three basic categories of harassment:
- Subtle: includes offensive staring, name-calling, put downs, unwanted comments and touching
- Explicit: includes offensive gestures and jokes, sexual or racially provocative remarks
- Criminal: includes indecent exposure, assault, sending obscene letters or making offensive phone calls, demand for money or goods and stalking.

The Victorian School of Languages is committed to providing a safe and secure environment that is free from all forms of bullying, harassment or discrimination based on gender, religion, race, lifestyle and colour. It aims to promote positive interpersonal relations between all members of the school community, prevent bullying, harassment, discrimination and promote student well-being in our school.

On-line safety:
Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school – requires students to behave responsibly. Behaving safely online involves protecting your own privacy and personal information and protecting the privacy of others (this includes the sharing of personal information and images).

Cyber-bullying:
Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging, blogs or web-pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as groups or collective members of an online community.

Responding to Harassment, Bullying and Cyber Bullying:
The Victorian School of Languages has a commitment to preventing and reducing bullying. Every member of the school community is responsible for preventing harassment and bullying. All incidents of bullying must be reported. All complaints will be taken seriously. Nothing will be considered insignificant. You will be treated with respect and confidentiality. None of these behaviours is acceptable and none will be tolerated.

The following policies need to be considered and consistent with implementing effective practice within the school community:
1. Anti bullying and Cyber bullying policy
2. Smoke Free Schools policy
3. Drug Education policy
4. Attendance policy
5. Enrolment policy
6. First Aid policy
7. Multicultural Diversity policy
8. Sexual Harassment policy
9. Yard Supervision policy
10. Asthma policy
11. Curriculum policy
12. Emergency Management policy
13. Equal Opportunity policy
14. Homework policy
15. Occupational Health and Safety policy
16. Teaching and Learning policy
17. Anaphylaxis policy
18. Assessment and Reporting policy
19. Drug Related Incidents policy
20. Privacy policy
21. Mandatory Reporting policy
22. Prohibited Substance policy

At Victorian School of Languages, we expect high standards of student behaviour based on cooperation, mutual responsibility and self discipline. We promote positive, non-discriminatory relationships among students, parents, staff and the wider community.

**Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community**

Students, staff and parent behaviour impacts on the educational, social, emotional and physical development of all members of the school community.

**Whole School:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be free of harassment</td>
<td>To ensure others are not harassed</td>
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<tr>
<td>To receive support in difficult situations</td>
<td>To provide support to each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be valued and treated with respect</td>
<td>Build positive relationships with the school community</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Students:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To work and play without interference</td>
<td>To allow others to work and play without interference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be treated fairly and courteously</td>
<td>To be polite, courteous and well mannered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn in a secure environment</td>
<td>To allow others to learn</td>
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</table>
### Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be treated with respect by students, parent(s)/carer(s) and peers</td>
<td>To treat students in a way that develop self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To communicate positively with parents and peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>To expect students to follow the Engagement Guidelines</td>
<td>To follow the procedures in the Engagement Guidelines</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To use logical consequences and restorative practices</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To keep records of significant disciplinary actions</td>
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<td>To expect students to learn</td>
<td>To assist students to learn</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To provide an inclusive and differentiated curriculum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To communicate student progress to parent(s)/carer(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>To expect students to follow all VSL policies</td>
<td>Fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the engagement policy</td>
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<td>To conduct all duties in accordance with the relevant duty statement in a manner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>befitting an employee in the teaching profession</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To be familiar with, and abide by, policies and practices of the VSL and the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), including the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>School's Equal Opportunity policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To provide a secure and productive learning environment in which students can</td>
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<td>actively participate, take responsibility for their own learning and experience</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>success</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To exercise an appropriate duty of care towards students</td>
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<td>To treat all students equitably and fairly</td>
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<td>To support their colleagues through teamwork and collaboration, actively</td>
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<td></td>
<td>contributing to a professional learning environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To show courtesy, consideration and co-operation in dealing with others (students,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>staff, parents, School administration) and with regard to decision making</td>
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<td></td>
<td>process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To liaise with all members of the school community in an understanding, inclusive</td>
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<td>and professional manner, promoting a respectful, tolerant and harmonious</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>environment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To participate regularly in appropriate professional development activities</td>
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</table>
Parents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To expect that their child will be educated in a secure environment in</td>
<td>Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials and attitude</td>
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<td>which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged</td>
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<tr>
<td>To be contacted when their child continually disregards the School</td>
<td>Promote respectful relationships</td>
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<td>Engagement Policy or is involved in a major incident. To have open</td>
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<td>lines of communication with their child’s teacher.</td>
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4. SHARED EXPECTATIONS

The Victorian School of Languages Vision and Values document, developed in consultation with the school community, establishes the significance of fostering a learning environment that caters for the individual needs of all students. Students are valued and cared for in a multi-cultural language/environment which recognizes the importance of:

- **Respecting language learning** – including greater intercultural awareness and a respect of all languages. A commitment to students from all communities and socio-economic backgrounds to study a language of their choice;

- **Valuing cultural diversity** - valuing our diversity including our diverse cultural heritages and diverse ways of functioning in a multi-cultural global community;

- **Creating a sense of pride in linguistic achievements** - developing and maintaining a harmonious and tolerant school which respects and values the contribution made by people of different cultures and backgrounds;

- **Developing student well-being** - developing resilience, self-confidence and a sense of personal pride and identity. Valuing and respecting the whole school community.

The intended outcome is to support the development of happy, positive, fulfilled individuals who are able to achieve their true potential and develop a sense of self-worth and personal growth.

The VSL has a shared high expectation, by all community members, of working to achieve the school vision, values, goals and targets through:

- Teaching practices which are inclusive of all members of the community and that encourage teachers to work collaboratively to ensure the learning experience for all students are similar

- A LOTE curriculum program which is accessible and engaging for all students

- An appropriate, relevant and challenging LOTE curriculum that provides students with the opportunity to experience success is in place and is regularly reviewed and evaluated

- The school working in partnership with the parent community to ensure they are fully informed and have an opportunity to input into whole school decision making.

**Victorian School of Languages Restorative Practices:**

The Victorian School of Languages places a high value on the development and maintenance of positive, healthy and respectful relationships and a supportive school environment. Area Managers and centre staff employ Restorative Practices when dealing with behaviour management. As a school we believe that our approach to student behaviour management should primarily be an *educative* one. There is a clear emphasis on the value of building positive social relationships, working and learning in teams and managing and resolving conflict.

Restorative Practices is a whole school approach promoting the building of relationships. Through conflicts being resolved, relationships are nurtured and restored between community members in order to provide high
quality interpersonal relationships of care and support. It replaces traditional punitive disciplinary processes with restorative alternatives.

The student is held accountable, but also explores how others have been affected by their actions. The student’s obligation to repair the harm caused includes considering the victim’s needs and suggesting ways the harm can be repaired and to move forward in a positive way.

The Restorative Practices approach sees a reduction in repeat offences and is seen as an opportunity for students to become more resilient. It enhances responsibility through building positive relationships across the community.

The Victorian School of Languages implements Restorative Practices in the following ways:

1) Circle time – a proactive measure designed to create positive connections and relationships and can be used for a class group or a smaller group

2) Restorative chat – is used to resolve incidents and repair relationships in small groups consisting victim(s) and wrongdoer(s) and their advocates

3) ‘No Blame’ conference – often organized in class groups to manage whole class difficulties and disruptions. The teachers of the class and the students in the class are involved.
5. SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Teachers/Administration staff encourage students to attend all scheduled face-to-face centre classes. All absences must be explained by a note from parent or guardian.

VCE students are expected to attend 80% of schedule face-to-face classes. All absences must be explained by a note from parent or guardian, or accompanied by a medical certificate if possible. Unexplained absences of 3 sessions or more during a semester could lead to a J or N (unsatisfactory) score for the Unit.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for all students.

Use of centralised database to record and interpret baseline data for student attendance figures and set specific targets to incorporate into Annual Implementation Plans for both Centres and Distance Education. Regular monitoring of weekly electronic student attendance, followed up by home/day school contact greatly improves attendance figures.

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, dependent upon specific concerns, including

- Understanding the particular student’s background and needs
- Involving the parents/carers in discussions around the child’s particular needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and parents
- Convening a student support group meeting to develop a plan of action
- Developing an individual flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plan with the assistance of Area Managers, teacher and wellbeing support
- Involve the day school/community support agencies

Student Support Group

A Student Support Group may be convened by the school to exchange information and facilitate solutions to behavioral problems or difficulties of students.

Suspension - General information

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and should normally only be used when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. Suspension should be used for the shortest time necessary.

The Victorian School of Languages has clearly stated procedures, policies and rules by which students must operate. In cases where students do not follow these rules, the relevant Area Managers will manage the disciplinary process. Every effort is made to provide discipline in a consistent, fair and transparent manner to achieve positive outcomes for the student.

Students will only be excluded from school when all other measures deemed appropriate have been exhausted or been implemented without success or where immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action given the student’s behaviour.
Suspension or expulsion measures are the responsibility of the Principal who will consult with Assistant Principals, Area Managers, teachers and students before implementing such measures. The school will consider the educational and emotional impacts on the student and school community when taking suspension or expulsion measures.

Suspension:

- Students will be suspended for the shortest time necessary
- Students can be suspended consecutively for maximum five school days
- Students cannot be suspended for more than fifteen school days in a school year
- Students can be suspended internally or externally
- Students can be suspended immediately or after a student support group is convened
- Students can be suspended for inappropriate behaviour:
  - while attending school
  - travelling to or from school or
  - engaging in an activity away from school
- **Students can be suspended on the following grounds:**
  - Behaving in such a way as to threaten or constitute a danger to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person
  - Committing an act of significant violence against a person or causing significant damage to or destruction of property or is knowingly involved in the theft of property
  - Processing, using or deliberately assisting another person to use prohibited drugs or substances
  - Failing to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher or other staff member
  - Consistently behaving in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student
  - Consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age, gender identity, impairment, physical features, political beliefs or activity, pregnancy, race, religious belief or activity, sexual orientation, etc.
  - When the principal deems a suspension is justified, procedures as outlined on page 26-27 of the ‘Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines’ will be followed

 Procedures for suspension

In determining whether to suspend a student, the Principal must ensure that this response is appropriate to:

a. The behaviour of the student is being suspended
b. The educational needs of the student
c. Any disability or additional learning needs of the student
d. The age of the student
e. The residential and social circumstances of the student
Expulsion – General Information

- Only the principal has the authority to expel a student from the school at which they are the principal. Expulsion is the most serious consequence and this action will only be taken when all other measures consistent with the staged response, outlined above, have been tried and it is deemed the only appropriate measure.

- Students can be expelled if, while attending school, travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity:
  
  o The student does anything for which they could be suspended
  
  o The students’ behaviour is of such a magnitude that, for the health, safety and wellbeing of other staff and students at the school and the need to maintain the effectiveness of the school’s educational programs, an expulsion is the only available option.

- The student and parents/carers must be informed that expulsion is being considered and must be given the opportunity to be heard.

- If principal considers that expulsion is justified, the regional director must be notified and must nominate a member of the regional staff to attend the student support group meeting to ensure appropriate alternate options are considered and to assist in the course of action agreed to at the meeting.

- Detailed ‘Procedures for Expulsion’ and ‘Procedures following Expulsion’ can be found page 28-31 of the ‘Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines’

Expulsion:

The School Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school. This power cannot be delegated to any other person at the school level. Expulsion is the most serious consequence and this action will only be taken after all other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in the engagement guidelines have been exhausted.

Roles and responsibilities of the principal and school council:

The principal is responsible for the implementation of the Student Engagement Policy. The school council is responsible for approving the policy, monitoring its effectiveness and evaluating its success.
**References:**

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