



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & INCLUSION POLICY



Preamble:

Inverloch/Kongwak Primary School works with parents and the community to provide a positive learning culture and strong foundation to formal education which will support all students to reach their academic, social/emotional, creative and physical potential. We aim to nurture active citizens who have an awareness of and concern for their social and natural environment.

To achieve our purpose we believe that it is important for all members of our school community to give their best effort, do their best work and be the best they can be.

We value:

- Respect for self and others
- Taking responsibility for learning
- Being socially responsible
- Developing and demonstrating emotional resilience
- Being happy
- Our community

Purpose:

To articulate our school community's expectations in the areas of student engagement, wellbeing, attendance and behaviour.

We understand that:-

School is a central part of daily life for children and young people and being engaged and happy at school can confer benefits including an enthusiasm for learning and also enhancing physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

Student wellbeing is a high priority and is everyone's responsibility. That is, student wellbeing is the responsibility of all members of our school community working together.

Social and emotional wellbeing and student engagement underpin effective student learning and positive behaviour. Being connected to school is a component of being engaged with school and refers to feeling good about being a student at this school, liking school, being happy at school, belonging at school and looking forward to school.

Our Culture:

At Inverloch/Kongwak Primary School we expect all members of our school community to be positive, supportive and respectful. We pride ourselves on having a safe, supportive and effective school environment in which students feel valued and cared for, can achieve their educational potential, participate actively in their school-life and effectively engage with their learning. We are an inclusive school community and we recognise and respond to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating rates of and preferences for learning. We promote, teach and reinforce pro-social values and behaviours. We welcome and encourage parent/carer and community participation through a range of programs and activities, such as 'parent/carers helpers in the classroom', 'Target Learning', 'Learning Assistance Program', helping out on camps and excursions and with house and school sports. We engage with parents/carers proactively and respectfully and expect the same in return. We aim to be proactive and prevent problems, intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs. We value our

local community and proactively involve our school in the community and the community in our school. No corporal punishment is used in our school.

School Profile:

The vast majority of children who attend the school are from the town of Inverloch itself. Kongwak is situated about 10 kilometres to the north; and the children attending there come in from the surrounding district. It is not uncommon for children who live in Inverloch to go to school at Kongwak for a period of their primary schooling, and vice versa. Over the last six years the Inverloch enrolment has been grown from 180 to 275 - and continues to grow; whilst Kongwak's has increased each year from as low as 15 in 2000 to its maximum of 52 in 2005 - and is currently at 37.

At Inverloch / Kongwak Primary School we have a range of students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, (where socio-economic refers to family income, education, occupation and wealth). The vast majority of our students speak English at home. Our students come from a wide range of family units, including single parents, step-families, blended families, nuclear families, foster-care, extended family care, etc.

Most of the students entering Prep at our school have attended pre-school, most from Inverloch Pre-school (or Korumburra in the case of Kongwak), while others have attended pre-schools or day care facilities in other towns and we do have some children entering the school who have not experienced any formal pre-school.

Absence and lateness to school are a concern for us. We have above average absenteeism when compared to the state. We also have a number of children who are frequently late to school. Both absenteeism and lateness impact negatively on student engagement, wellbeing and learning. Lateness also impacts negatively on teaching and on other students' learning.

Rights and Responsibilities

Our school community consists of:-

- Staff
- Students
- Parents/Carers
- Volunteers
- Visitors

Every member of the school community has the right to fully participate in a learning environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves the right to be treated with respect and dignity. In particular, our school culture actively supports and promotes the following rights for all members of the school community:-

- the right to learn and teach
- the right to be safe (physically and emotionally safe)
- the right to be happy and respected
- the right to have our property (own, others', school's) cared for.

Every member of the school community has the responsibility to behave in such a way as to promote a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment, and to treat all other members with respect and dignity.

All members of our school community have the right to be free of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and (if bullied) to be provided with help and support. All members of the school community have the

responsibility to abstain personally from bullying others, to actively discourage bullying when it occurs, to intervene wherever possible and to give support to those who are bullied.

For our approaches to behaviour management and bullying please see the following documents:-

- **Inverloch / Kongwak approach to prevention and management of incidents of Bullying.**

- **Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities Policy.**

All members of our school community are expected to comply with the following Acts of Parliament and the Charter of Human Rights

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.

Under the act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:

- age
- breastfeeding
- gender identity
- impairment
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status or status as carer
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation
- personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).

2. **The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The 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.

While we are all afforded these basic human rights, we understand that we have the responsibility to

protect and not detract from the rights of others.

3. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005

We are an inclusive school. We endeavour to meet the needs of all students. We believe that all children can learn although one child may not learn at the same rate or in the same way as another child.

This Act and associated Standards refer to making 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the school, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, we take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

We consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the school, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to us if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to our school or to an individual.

To support students with a disability or impairment we will:-

- Communicate and work with parents/carers
- Identify a student's needs as early as possible
- Assess the student's needs
- Refer the student for formal assessment if required such as Speech and Language, Intellectual, Social-emotional, Behavioural, etc
- Where appropriate apply for additional funding through the DET Program for Students with Disabilities and Impairments
- Implement Individual Learning Plans where appropriate
- Convene Student Support Groups which will include the parent/carer and school staff as appropriate, other support staff if necessary
- Modify the curriculum as required
- Make other modifications as required and where it is practical and reasonable to do so

Intervention and additional support at Inverloch/Kongwak Primary School

Depending on the student's needs and the reasons for the intervention, we have a range of possible intervention strategies available to us. Data about the student will generally inform the need for intervention. Data might be in the form of poor attendance or punctuality, academic achievement (changes in academic performance and/or poor academic performance) or observations of the student

eg conflict with others, general appearance, emotional withdrawal or outbursts, lacking in motivation, etc.

The first level of support is within the classroom. Teachers will use the data they have about student learning and achievement to inform their teaching and direct student learning. If support for behaviour, social-emotional needs then the classroom teacher may employ strategies from a variety of sources including “Calmer Classrooms”.

If additional academic support is considered necessary then the teacher might consider involving the student in ‘Target Learning’ or other intervention programs beyond the classroom (eg LAP).

If additional support for behaviour, social-emotional needs is required the classroom teacher may discuss the student’s needs with the Principal / Assistant Principal and a range of intervention strategies can be considered, such as talking with the student, holding a meeting with the parent/s, etc.

The next level of support may necessitate a referral to DET support staff (Social Workers, Speech Pathologists, and Psychologists) or other agencies, professionals.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle, or as required due to changes in relevant Acts, Laws or should situations arise that require earlier consideration.

School Council Approval	<i>Kongwak PS</i>
	<i>Inverloch PS</i>
Review Cycle:	3
Next review and approval:	



INVERLOCH / KONGWAK PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY GUIDELINES



Beliefs

- Student attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the community
- Regular attendance provides the best opportunity for student learning and engagement.
- Regular and consistent attendance at school is a protective factor for student wellbeing
- School attendance is important
- Punctuality to school is important for continuity and preparation for learning throughout the day
- Punctuality to school is also good manners and important preparation for work and community participation
- Unexplained absence on an ongoing (ad hoc or regular) basis is often an indication of other issues, such as family and/or welfare issues.

Expectations

- Students will attend school daily unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent.
- Students will be punctual to school.
- That when a student is absent from school, it is for a legitimate reason.
- Absences from school will be explained promptly by parents via a written note or a phone call to the office.

Aims

- To have high level attendance
- To have students arrive at school on time
- To improve attendance and punctuality for all students
- To monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance
- To develop and support a parent and community culture that views regular school attendance, and punctuality as important.
- To encourage parents/carers to promptly communicate with the school regarding student absences

Responsibilities

Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school on every school day and, if absent, that they promptly provide a written explanation to the school explaining why the absence occurred.
- Parents/carers have a responsibility to support their child to be punctual to school.
- Parents/carers have a responsibility to teach their child about the importance of attendance at school and punctuality at school to set them on a positive path for their adult lives.

School Leaders

- Promote school attendance and punctuality
- Inform parents/carers re: attendance
- Celebrate improved and high levels of attendance
- Communicate with parents/carers where absenteeism and/or lateness to school are a concern
- Follow-up unexplained absences
- Support parents/carers to improve student attendance and punctuality

- Refer parents/carers to DET and/or support agencies for follow-up
- Seek assistance from DET and/or other agencies, individuals as necessary

Teachers

- Maintain accurate records of attendance and punctuality
- Mark the Rolls in accordance with DET guidelines and requirements
- Refer latecomers to the office to 'sign-in'
- Communicate with parents when absenteeism and/or punctuality is a concern
- Promote school attendance and punctuality
- Communicate with promptly and request support from the Principal/Assistant Principal when there are concerns re: unexplained absence, unaddressed lateness, explained but ongoing (ad hoc or regular) absence.

Reasons why 'It's Not OK to Be Late to School'

Students being late to school can have an effect on the teacher, other students in their class and themselves in the following ways.

Latecomers:

- miss out on talking to their class teacher before school
- miss out on playing with other children before school
- miss out on organisation time, for example getting their workbooks and pencil case from their tub and setting up their table for the day
- miss out on roll marking, lunch orders being sent to the canteen and taking monies or notices to the office – and their notices and lunch orders often stay in their school bag
- miss out on learning time when they take their lunch order to the canteen and monies or notices to the office
- miss out on hearing what's happening for the day
- are often unsure about what they have to do in the lesson
- can arrive at their classroom, find that their class has moved and then waste time wandering around the school searching for the group
- can arrive at their classroom to find that their class has gone to a specialist lesson and they do not know where to go
- particularly miss out on reading and writing learning time
- find learning becomes disjointed and difficult
- are failing to take responsibility for their learning
- tend not to see being late as a problem
- are often unapologetic to the teacher and the class

Other students are affected:

- distracted when others arrive late
- become bored because the teacher has to repeat instructions, go over things again for late-comers
- miss out on learning activities because time was wasted by late-comers
- have to re-start a task when a late-comer is added to their group or as a partner
- have to start group tasks by themselves when a partner is late

Teachers are affected too:

- need to repeat instructions and/or find extra sheets or material before late students can begin working
- need to give late students extra attention so that they know what has happened or what the class is doing
- can be expected by the parents of latecomers to be available although teaching has

- begun
- have to find time to communicate their concerns to parents about unexplained
- absenteeism and late attendance by phone, a note or a
- meeting after school.

Reasons why 'It's Not OK to Be Away from school'

When students stay away from school their learning and friendships are affected and their teachers can become frustrated and disappointed because learning becomes disjointed and difficult. Students who stay away from school:

- miss the introduction of new work
- fail to complete work
- miss revision
- miss maths, reading and spelling tests
- miss homework explanation and worksheets
- fall behind with their learning
- develop disjointed home-reading routines
- develop inconsistent homework returns
- may lack confidence and feel embarrassed because they cannot do work the class has been studying
- feel left out from class discussion when they have missed a special class activity and cannot do the associated work
- miss specialist lessons because these lessons only occur once a week and so, for example, art work is not completed or is rushed in order to finish in the limited time available, physical education skill work is not practised, library work is not completed and library skill information is missed
- miss notices and newsletters
- miss celebrations, for example student of the week, class awards, excursions, school visitors, assemblies and special activities
- can find it difficult to break into established friendship groups and develop good friendships with their peers
- can develop a poor attitude towards school believing 'I won't miss much if I'm not at school'
- fail to realise that the teachers and students miss them.

When students are sick, parents can make it easier for them to return to school by:

- sending a note
- assisting them to complete homework and home reading routines
- And, if the student has been absent for an extended period, checking with the teacher and other parents to see if there are any special activities coming up to prepare for or information that the student might have missed while absent.

Sometimes students stay at home for reasons that are **not** acceptable. We ask parents and carers not to encourage, support or condone a student staying away from school for any non-legitimate reasons. For example:

- the student's birthday (or a family member's birthday)
- too tired to come to school because of a late night
- staying home with a sibling or parent who is sick
- not completing homework or a project and avoiding the consequences
- staying away for the whole day when an appointment is booked for a short time in the morning or afternoon
- going shopping
- going to the airport to see someone off or arriving
- helping parents or carers
- keeping a family member or carer company

- translating for parents
- weather conditions, for example too hot, too wet, too cold.

Engagement and Wellbeing: Responsibilities of Staff, Parents and Students

School Staff

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

Our Principal, Assistant Principal and all Teachers adhere to the VIT Code of Conduct:-

As teachers, we use our expert knowledge to provide experiences that inspire and facilitate student learning. We are a significant force in developing a knowledgeable, creative, productive and democratic society. The values that underpin our profession are **integrity, respect** and **responsibility**.

We hold a unique position of trust and influence, which we recognise in our relationships with students, parents (caregivers and guardians), colleagues and the community.

We demonstrate our integrity by:

- acting in the best interest of students
- maintaining a professional relationship with students, parents, colleagues and the community
- behaving in ways that respect and advance the profession.

We demonstrate our respect by:

- acting with care and compassion
- treating students fairly and impartially
- holding our colleagues in high regard
- acknowledging parents as partners in the education of their children.

We demonstrate our responsibility by:

- providing quality teaching
- maintaining and developing our professional practice
- working cooperatively with colleagues in the best interest of our students.

All staff of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and all locally employed staff adhere to the DET People Principles:-

RESPECT AND VALUE OTHERS means recognising the thoughts, feelings and concerns of others, interacting with them in a sensitive and considerate way and taking account of their diverse experiences and backgrounds and valuing their contribution.

WORK COLLABORATIVELY means willingly co-operating with others, learning from them, sharing expertise and information and actively focussing on common Department goals.

BEHAVE ETHICALLY means being honest and communicating openly and constructively. It means "walking the talk" by acting in line with the principles, values and standards of DET and challenging others to do this.

DEVELOP SELF AND OTHERS means taking opportunities for challenge, self development and learning and enabling others to learn, grow and lead.

DELIVER QUALITY RESULTS means striving to do things better, setting challenging goals and continuously to deliver the best possible outcomes consistent with the goals and targets laid down by Government.

**We believe that the following things are important attributes
for A GOOD TEACHER/TEAM MEMBER**

- Is positive, enthusiastic, committed and professional
- Is organised
- Is an on-going learner - reflective, continually seeks to improve, up-to-date with latest best practice
- Listens to and communicates well with all students, teachers and parents
- Shows respect for, and develops positive relationships with, all students, teachers and parents
- Has a sense of humour
- Takes responsibility for all students within the school
- Is resourceful and flexible
- Shows initiative - sees what needs to be done and does it
- Sets a good example for students and other staff members
- Is aware of and contributes to “the big picture” - sees and acts upon whole-school issues
- Is punctual - meets deadlines
- Is reliable - follows through on issues
- Provides students and staff with constructive feedback; accepts feedback with a constructive approach
- Is a competent problem solver
- Contributes to after-hours activities
- Implements agreed policies, programs and processes
- Shows an interest in children’s lives beyond school
- Is aware of the children’s needs and challenges; and engages all students
- Cares for and supports all students
- Has a good knowledge of curriculum
- Is tolerant and fair
- Employs high level questioning of students to challenge and extend their understanding
- Gives clear instructions
- Strives to foster a positive relationship with every child; and is seen by the child to be actively doing so
- Imparts high expectations
- Provides a variety of learning experiences for students
- Is consistent
- Speaks constructively about children
- Is well planned - both in the classroom and for other school activities and processes
- Supports other staff - works collaboratively, willing to help when needed
- Contributes to discussions and decision making
- Attends Staff and Unit Meetings
- Shares knowledge, ideas and resources

**We believe that the following attributes
MAKE A GOOD PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

- Is persistent
- Is approachable
- Has a sense of humour
- Is a problem-solver
- Is willing to learn; has the ability to change
- Is knowledgeable; creative and imaginative
- Demonstrates empathy, understanding
- Is flexible
- Is positive
- Is honest
- Is enthusiastic
- Is organised
- Is consultative; prepared to listen; has an open door
- Consults with the staff
- Makes the difficult decisions
- Is supportive of parents, students, staff
- Is a good communicator; provides feedback
- Is a good delegator
- Sees him/herself as a part of the staff
- Is a team person
- Is assertive
- Fair disciplinarian
- Demonstrates fairness and equity
- Accommodating of staff needs, but able to put school/students' needs first
- Has vision; goals/directions for the school
- Knows how to acquire finance/resources for the school
- Good knowledge of curriculum / DET issues
- Good financial manager
- In touch with the classroom
- Likes children; is involved with children

We believe these things make A GOOD SCHOOL

SCHOOL:

- Shared values and goals - knows where it is going, how it is going to get there, able to measure its success
- Strives for ongoing improvement; is reflective
- Effective whole school discipline policy and uniform policy
- Well resourced
- Celebration and promotion of, and pride in, achievements

STUDENTS:

- Happy, successful, co-operative, motivated
- Well-mannered and polite to each other, staff, parents, visitors

STAFF:

- Dedicated, effective, happy and supportive leadership / team
- Teachers open to new ideas; life-long learners
- Well-presented, professional and approachable teachers
- Fair distribution of workload
- Helpful and friendly School Support Staff
- Shared responsibility for all students
- Effective communication among all

PARENTS:

- Supportive and involved parents and community
- Effective communication between school and home

CURRICULUM / TEACHING:

- Exemplary delivery of agreed curriculum
- Acceptance of different teaching styles
- Positive and productive working tone in classrooms
- Staff and children having fun
- Small class numbers (versus) availability of programs
- Caters for all abilities and interests

ENVIRONMENT:

- Safe and attractive; caring and supportive; open and inviting; energetic
- Mutual respect involving staff, children and parents

We believe the following things make A GOOD CLASSROOM

STUDENTS:

- Engaged, motivated, co-operative, happy, succeeding
- Encouraged to take risks; encouraged to take responsibility for their learning
- Not tired, well fed, involved in exercise

TEACHER:

- Actively teaching
- (All) work corrected

PARENTS:

- Supportive and involved

CURRICULUM:

- Learning takes place beyond the classroom
- Children at risk supported; all children challenged
- Time on task - effective and maximum use of learning time

ENVIRONMENT:

- Well organised and orderly physically and routine-wise
- Welcoming, caring, safe, positive relationships
- Humour
- Attractive, meaningful displays of children's work
- Display of whole-school policies/issues
- Culture of success and celebration
- A place where children want to be
- Well resourced; adequate storage
- Clean, well-lit and ventilated

Volunteers in our school have the same rights as other members of our school community and in turn have a responsibility to:-

- respect the rights of all members of the school
- sign the volunteers 'in & out' book in the office
- wear their name badge at all times when in the school and especially during sessions (where required / appropriate)
- treat all information about students with confidentiality (unless they have any concerns for their welfare, in which case they will discuss their concerns with Principal/Assistant Principal)
- refrain from commenting about school staff, parents and other students
- participate in training sessions and meetings as appropriate
- discuss any concerns or issues with the class teacher or school leaders

STUDENTS are expected to:-

- attend school every school day
- be on time to school and to all classes
- develop increasing age appropriate responsibility for their learning
- develop increasing age appropriate independence
- show respect for themselves and other members of the school community
- allow others their rights by behaving in a responsible manner
 - right to learn and teach
 - right to be safe
 - right to be happy and respected
 - right to have our (and others and school) property cared for
- give their best to be their best
- continue to develop and use their Getting Along, Organisation, Confidence, Persistence and Resilience skills
- look after their property
- be active participants in their learning, and in all classroom and school activities
- communicate with teachers and other school staff promptly if they have any concerns, need assistance, etc

PARENTS/CARERS are expected to:-

- ensure their children are able to fully participate in their learning and at school
 - have adequate sleep
 - have a healthy diet and are well fed
 - have plenty of exercise
 - have positive relationships within the family
- ensure their children attend school every school day and are on time to school
- ensure children have the equipment they need and have all of it properly and clearly labelled with the child's name
- ensure children have school uniform and have it all properly and clearly labelled with the child's name
- read the school newsletter each Thursday
- read any notices sent home promptly
- return permission notices, forms, money etc promptly
- take an active interest in their child's learning and progress
- speak positively about school, teachers and learning especially when around children
- communicate respectfully with school staff
- communicate information about their child's wellbeing and provide information to the school about issues that are impacting on or may impact on the child
- assist school staff to maintain a safe and respectful environment
- assist children with their home learning / study
- model learning, positive attitudes, habits of the mind and behaviours
- model constructive, respectful problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies
- discuss any concerns with class teachers at an appropriate time and with school leaders as necessary (refrain from discussing concerns with other parents and especially in front of children)