

Student Engagement Policy

Section 1 – School Profile

Distance Education Centre Victoria is a school that provides innovative 21st century learning in a stimulating and supportive environment that engages all students and encourages them in the pursuit of excellence and the achievement of individual goals.

Showing **respect** for self and others in developing an **inclusive** environment that **inspires** and supports all to work to their capacity and achieve:

- Developing a sense of pride and self-esteem.
- Showing **integrity** in words and actions.
- **Trusting** and being trusted.
- Taking **responsibility** for self, others and the community.
- Providing **equality of opportunity** to **nurture** and **empower** each individual.
- **Excellence** is demonstrated in commitment to the achievement of personal and team learning goals (to achieve personal excellence); in commitment to take on the challenge and persevere ; in teamwork and cooperation.

The school aspires to excellence and becoming a world leader in:

- the exploration and creation of new learning spaces
- personalisation of learning in an F-12 school environment.
- immersive education (rich, authentic, project-based tasks that students engage with deeply at individual and group levels)

Section 2 – Values and Vision

The DECV is a unique and vibrant learning community that facilitates lifelong learning. This is encapsulated in its motto of 'Flexible learning for all'. The DECV has a range of strategies and programs for students that are designed to promote engagement and participation. These programs aim to promote belonging and a sense of connectedness.

We recognise that optimal levels of student engagement and wellbeing are fundamental to maximising student learning outcomes. We also recognise that students learn best in environments where they feel safe and supported and where teachers have high expectations for their learning. Teachers at the DECV are committed to knowing their students and understanding their individual needs so that they are engaged in meaningful learning experiences. Our personalised learning support ensures local and global access to the highest quality flexible education.

We develop positive learning relationships that are characterised by effective, regular and ongoing communication between students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders. These learning

relationships are the essence of a supportive and positive school culture where the diverse learning and wellbeing needs of students are recognised and met. We encourage active and meaningful student participation and give all students a voice in their learning and the way their school functions, so that they feel valued and empowered.

The DECV sets goals and targets in the School Strategic Plan that are designed to promote continuous school improvement. We provide flexible, enriching, high quality learning programs for all students, including those who do not access mainstream schools, in order to inspire independent lifelong learning and to promote personal growth. The goals and key improvement strategies taken from the current strategic plan are as follows:

Goal:

- To foster positive learning relationships with all students F-12

Key Improvement Strategies

- Further develop the DECV learning community by improving interaction amongst students, parents, teachers and other members of our school community.
- Explore the adoption of student individual learning plans.
- Continue to develop student engagement through the work on Student Voice

Rights and Responsibilities

Everyone in the school community has a right to access and participate in the DECV school program, free of hindrance by others and, is responsible for not hindering, in any way, the engagement and participation of others.

Student Rights

All DECV students have the right to:

- engage in regular communication with teaching staff and receive meaningful and timely feedback
- access resources to enable them to maximise their full potential
- be respected, valued and have opportunities to learn from the differences of others
- work independently and as a group member, where appropriate
- engage with digital technology and feel safe within online learning environments

Student Responsibilities

All DECV students are responsible for:

- striving to work to the best of their abilities at all times
- regularly participating by submitting work in accordance with the prescribed or negotiated submission timetable
- taking responsibility for their own learning by setting achievable goals and establishing a weekly routine or timetable
- maintaining contact with their teachers by utilising all available communication options
- where possible, attending and participating in seminars, excursions and online and collaborative activities
- notifying their teacher if they are unable to meet submission deadlines
- using digital technology safely and responsibly, i.e. Acceptable Use Agreement
- obtaining all required learning materials

- demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support learning and wellbeing for all and contribute to a positive school environment that is safe, inclusive and engaging
- understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable
- maintaining a balance between study and other aspects of their life

Parent/Carer Rights

All parents/carers have the right to:

- Meaningful feedback from and communication with teaching staff
- To be notified of any pertinent information relating to the student
- Access to any information regarding the student within the confines of any legal requirement.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

All parents/carers are responsible for:

- liaising with members of the school community in a positive and respectful manner
- providing the school with all relevant information pertaining to the student
- working with the school in a variety of forums and responding to communications in a timely manner
- supporting students to engage and participate in their learning program and the wider school community
- ensuring their child submits work in accordance with the prescribed or negotiated submission timetable

Teacher Rights

All DECV teachers have the right to:

- receive professional development to build their capacity
- positive and constructive support and feedback from their colleagues and school leadership
- a safe and healthy work environment
- feel safe and supported in their use of digital technology

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers at DECV have a responsibility to:

- uphold the Victorian teaching profession code of conduct
- design and implement learning programs that;
 - engage students in active learning targeted to student needs
 - are in line with AusVELS and the VCAA Study Designs
- incorporate appropriate ICT tools to enable collaboration, higher order thinking and reflection
- use purposeful ongoing assessment strategies to ensure continuous student progress.
- continuously evaluate and adapt learning programs based on student voice, student attitudes to school survey, and student achievement data
- develop strong learning relationships with students, parents and other stakeholders
- maintain a safe, supportive environment for students
- to be collaborative, cooperative and recognise the value of others' contributions with a view to negotiating the best outcomes for teams, students and DECV as a whole.
- monitor student progress and if necessary, implement the Student Management Action Plan
- model behaviours expected from students
- build a collegiate atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and support each other.

Shared expectations

There is an expectation that all members of the DECV school community will uphold the rights and responsibilities as outlined above.

Section 3 - Engagement Strategies

The DECV Student Engagement Policy reflects the school community's shared vision and aspirations that are essential in ensuring a positive, supportive and inclusive school culture as outlined in the School Strategic Plan. It is constructed on the understanding that student engagement is influenced by a wide range of factors. The policy includes all universal (school-wide), targeted (population-specific) and individual (student-specific) strategies to facilitate and maintain the highest standard of educational and social connection. This allows for a remote and diverse range of students of varying needs and vulnerabilities to remain connected with their educational environment. Strategies are implemented, monitored and evaluated to ensure a supportive and enriching learning experience. This allows for the full educational potentials of students to be identified and cultivated thereby sustaining an environment in which students develop the interest in and capacity to become lifelong learners.

Student engagement involves communication and collaboration between relevant stakeholders. The DECV has a range of strategies and delivers a number of programs for students that are designed to ensure student engagement in the follow areas:

- School policy
 - Strategic Plan
 - AIP
 - Student Engagement Policy
 - Curriculum Framework Policy
- Organisation
 - Student Management Action Plan
 - Student Learning Action Plan
 - Partnerships with mainstream and alternative settings
 - Partnerships with Community Agencies
- Teaching and Learning
 - Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning
 - Differentiated Learning
 - Personalised Learning
 - Customised Learning Programs and Individual Learning Plans
 - Launchpad and Discovery Learning and My Journey
 - Student Assessment
 - Toolbox
 - Timely feedback and support related to student submissions
 - Seminars and Excursions
 - Student Visits
 - Online Learning Environment
- Student Support
 - Student Support Intake Interview
 - Supervisor Interview
 - Careers Advisor
 - Transitions and Pathways Team
- Student Wellbeing
 - Student Wellbeing Team
 - Wellbeing Case Workers
 - Student Inclusion Coordinator
 - Educational Psychologist
 - Student Contact Time
 - Circuit Breaker Program
 - Young Parents Program
- School Community
 - Student Voice
 - Parent Portal
 - Success with Distance Day
 - 11/12 Orientation Day
 - Information and Awards Days
 - Curriculum Days
 - F-12 E-Newsletter
 - DECV Connect
 - School Camp

- Making Waves Concert
- SEND X 2
- Student Footy Tipping Competition
- Transition week

Section 4: Processes

Due to the fact that DECV students do not physically attend on a daily basis, the student engagement policy refers to a student's active participation in their learning program.

The following are ways in which we identify and promote school engagement:

- Student engagement is identified through submission of work in relation to the prescribed or negotiated timetable and other forms of student activity. These are recorded on the database as submissions or contact (phone/email/visits/attendance at online lessons, seminars or excursions)
- Where issues around non engagement are identified the Student Management Action Plan (SMAP) is activated.
- The school recognises medical or personal hardship as reasonable grounds for periods of non-engagement. The [Special Provision Policy](#) is activated in cases when appropriate supporting documentation is provided.
- Parents, guardians and students are informed about DECV school engagement expectations at the time of enrolment and on an ongoing basis.
- The enrolment process and the intake interview are used to identify students who are at risk of disengagement from their learning program. Once identified, these students are provided with strategies to promote student engagement.
- Ongoing disengagement will result in a Student Learning Action Meeting (SLAM) in relation to the student
- The SLAM will be convened by the Student Support Teacher and attended by key teachers and other personnel. Engagement strategies will be developed and communicated to the student and their parents/guardians. Unresolved issues may result in a referral to Pathways & Transitions where alternative suitable educational pathways will be investigated.
- DEECD and enrolment auditors will be given complete access to all student engagement records if requested
- All student engagement data will be retained and stored at the school

Strategies to Improve Student Engagement

- Ongoing and regular contact using a range of modes of communication such as email, phone, face-to-face etc.
- Student Contact Time
- Relationship building through a comprehensive intake process
- Regular positive encouragement and feedback regarding weekly submissions
- School, home and student visits
- Student Voice
- Attendance at seminars, excursions, information days and camp
- SMAP Process
- SLAM to develop engagement strategies

Behavioural Issues

Student behavioural issues at the DECV may include:

- not submitting work according to the prescribed or negotiated timetable
- limited or non-existent contact with their teacher
- being disruptive in the online environment or during face to face activities
- bullying and harassment in the online environment or during face to face activities
- not cooperating with their supervisor and/or teacher

Responses may include:

- Teacher to contact student and/or parent/carer to resolve the issue.
- Student to reflect on the incident (student incident report may be completed)
- Reflection may allow opportunity for student to take responsibility for actions
- Enactment of the SMAP process
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Student Learning Action Management meeting involving relevant personnel
- Identified as a student whose progress is of concern
- Placed on a student engagement agreement

In the unlikely event that a student is removed from the online environment, seminars, camps, excursions etc., Parent/carers will be notified when:

- The student is under 18 years of age
- The student is over 17 years of age, with disability or impairment and is living separately, apart and independently from his/her parents
- For any reason the parent is not available or cannot be contacted. In these circumstances the principal may then refer to the student over the age of 18 years of age in place of 'a parent'. Where a student has a disability or impairment, the principal must make enquiries as to the student's ability to represent themselves. After making such enquiries, if the principal is satisfied that the student lacks the ability to adequately represent themselves, the student cannot be referred to in place of 'a parent'. In this case, as with a student under 18 years of age, the principal may regard as 'a parent' an adult whom the principal considers to be suitable and available to perform the role of the parent.

Student Support Group

A [Student Support Group](#) may be convened by schools to exchange information and facilitate student engagement.

NSUBMIT (F-10) Transitions (11-12)

Students under 17 years of age may be placed in a non-submitting category (NSUBMIT or Transitions) and referred to Pathways & Transitions when they have not engaged with the educational program for a period of time relevant to individual circumstances and the SMAPs process. Students will be transitioned and exited to an appropriate alternative program or setting.

Students whose progress has been of concern will be reviewed for suitability for enrolment in the future. If enrolment is accepted, students will be placed on a student engagement agreement.

The *Education Training and Reform Act (2006)* prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any Victorian Government school.

Date Implemented	September 2014
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Review Date	December 2014
Related Policies	DECV Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy DECV Student Inclusion Policy DECV Complaints Policy Special Provision Policy DECV Curriculum Framework School Strategic Plan 2011-14 Annual Implementation Plan 2014
References	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx