

Footscray Primary School



Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy 2015

Policy Statement

Footscray Primary is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

It is fundamental to acknowledge that each teacher is a vital source of support and a determinant in the success of their students. The teachers at this school will work collectively to ensure that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning. This school recognises the need to be engaging and inclusive, recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning and intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs.

Our school strives to be a learning community where students and teachers can relate well to each other, and where different ideas and viewpoints are valued and respected.

Rationale

At Footscray Primary we believe that children can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive, fair and respectful school culture to engage and support their learning.

Purpose

This document is about the ways in which we aim to create, maintain and improve student engagement, and the procedures we use when things go wrong. It is specific to the needs and individual character of Footscray Primary, and consistent with the DEECD document: *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy*

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx>

1. The school will focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success.
2. The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management approach. (Positive Behaviour and Discipline Essential Agreements)
3. The school will encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children.
4. The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
5. The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
6. The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
7. The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
8. Providing a safe environment for children where risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally safe (Child Safety, Mandatory Reporting Essential Agreements).
9. The encouragement of educational achievement and excellence, prevention of absences and inappropriate behaviour.
10. Providing support for individual circumstances when students begins to disengage from their learning, when regular attendance is not consistent or positive behaviours not demonstrated.

11. The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
12. The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

LINKS AND APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)

Appendix A: Student Engagement Policy and Processes

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/engagement/default.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/additionalneeds/default.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/attendance/default.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/sfyouthservices/default.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/policy.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/default.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/oohc/effect/behaviour.htm>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/oohc/support.htm>

Glossary

Student **engagement** is the connection that students feel between themselves and the school. This connection can be to the schoolwork itself (*cognitive engagement*), to the people at school (*emotional engagement*) or to the structures, rules and routines of the school (*behavioural engagement*).

Engagement can be gained through personal relationships with teachers and friends, through success in classwork, through sport, music and art. **Engagement** can be gained through the excitement of a challenge or the comfort of knowing what each day will bring. **Engagement** will come in a different form for each student, but there are common factors which promote **engagement**.

We measure school engagement in a variety of ways. Two simple measures of engagement are attendance and behaviour, the idea being that an engaged child is at school and doing the right things.

Well-Being

Wellbeing is about our capacity to express ourselves freely and to grow both socially and emotionally as autonomous beings. It is a measure of our ability to embrace ourselves, our community and the world in which we live. It is about our drive and motivation to explore life and our ability to see beauty in the details of our existence. (Wellbeing Australia – Building Healthy Communities -2015)

Section 2 -Mission, Values and Purpose

Mission

Our mission is to develop students who are internationally minded, active, compassionate and life-long learners who strive to achieve their personal best.

Vision

Our vision for the personal and academic development of all students is fostered by:

- An authentic, comprehensive and balanced curriculum personalised for all learners developing 21st-Century learning skills.
- A safe, supportive and engaging environment where student choice is honoured.
- Developing deep understanding by exploring internationalism and responsible citizenship and sustainability through inquiry.
- Developing genuine partnerships with our community.

Our Values:

Personal Best - Striving to do our best, achieving our goals and celebrating our successes.

Harmony - Acknowledging and valuing individual differences and actively contributing towards a safe and caring environment.

Responsibility - Taking ownership of behaviour and actions and setting a positive role model for others.

Cooperation - Working together, communicating effectively and supporting and challenging each other appropriately.

Respect - Maintaining integrity by being honest and courteous at all times and acknowledging the beliefs and rights of others.

Our Purpose:

Our central purpose is to provide quality learning experiences through a child-centred curriculum. In order to achieve this:

1. The needs of the children come first.
2. Everyone in the community is special and important.
3. Each of us work together to be the best we can.
4. Learning is active, meaningful and creative.
5. We have high expectations of ourselves and each other.
6. We work collaboratively in a stimulating learning environment.

Section 3

WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT –

The importance of children's mental health and wellbeing is a priority. The goal of schooling is to provide a relevant and engaging curriculum that is connected to the children's world. The Primary Years Programme is a transdisciplinary approach to learning. It takes into account what students should learn based on what will be best for their development in the long term. This developmental approach takes into the characteristics, capabilities and interests of different aged children. It also acknowledges that children learn at different rates and individual patterns of development are complex and not sequential. The learning is a balance between the intellectual, the social and the personal, each is important and interlinked.

At Footscray Primary School we believe real engagement stems from a deep and genuine sense of belonging and that positive learning outcomes will be a result.

Mental health and wellbeing is vital for learning and life. Children who are mentally healthy learn better, benefit from life experiences and have stronger relationships with family members, school staff and peers. They are better equipped to meet life's challenges and to contribute productively to their families, friends and society in ways that are appropriate for their age.

Good mental health in childhood also provides a solid foundation for managing the transition to adolescence and adulthood without showing significant behavioural or academic difficulties.

Mental Health and Learning

Good mental health and wellbeing is integral to academic learning. Mentally healthy students arrive at school ready to learn and are more likely to achieve academic success. They are more motivated learners, have fewer behavioural problems, and show greater commitment to their schoolwork. They are also more likely to experience success after primary school, with a greater likelihood of graduating and better prospects for constructive employment.

Conversely, poor mental health reduces students' ability to learn and can lead to school failure and drop out. Academic failure has lasting consequences, as the failure to learn in school limits a person's chance to succeed in the future.

Opportunities that contribute to the school and effectively engage students in their learning include:

At Footscray Primary we have a very strong Performance and Development Culture, and are fully committed to a continuous improvement model. However, we believe that a positive school culture is firmly rooted in the development of strong relationships between all members of the school community. We believe that real engagement stems from a deep and genuine sense of belonging, and that positive learning outcomes will follow.

Opportunities that contribute to the school and effectively engage students in their learning include:

- student three way conferences for students to share goals and reflections with their parents
- student leadership programs with a strong focus on developing leadership qualities of all students culminating in the year six school leaders program
- student voice in the classroom through the use of thinking tools and conferences
- proactively engaging parents to be involved in the school's programs

- intervening early to identify and respond to student needs for social and emotional support
- students being involved and feeling connected to the school community
- recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students through the PSD Support program, ESL, Refugee Support, on-site counselling (in-house and through SSSO)
- adapting current pedagogical knowledge and thinking through meaningful learning experiences, through well-developed inquiry that have a strong international and global perspective. These programs ensure that a multi-national community have a voice into school curriculum and the school program is respectful to the community it serves.
- encouraging students to achieve full attendance to maximise their ability to learn
- developing intensive literacy and numeracy improvement strategies and implementing such strategies as part of the school improvement agenda
- attending professional learning to ensure strategies and approaches are adopted and implemented.

The role of schools in improving children's mental health and wellbeing

Promoting and teaching pro-social skills and behaviours helps children to engage with school, their peers, their teachers and their learning.

We have a number of strategies to promote social values which include:

- Development of classroom essential agreements based on the school's values. P.Y.P attitudes and the learner profile.
- Learning how to manage our feelings and get along with others is an important part of children's development. It helps them become better learners and feel good about themselves. This is the transdisciplinary skills of the P.Y.P curriculum framework that are taught as part of the six units of inquiry.
- Positive and respectful relationships at school help children and families feel that they belong and that their contributions are valued. Teachers use resources such as Bounce back to support the explicit teaching about how we can develop positive relationships.
- Professional learning for teachers through examining the research around developing relationships with students, managing classroom behaviour through establishing rules and procedures and communicating high expectations support a consistent approach and shared language across the school.
- The development of a scope and sequence aligned with the Victorian curriculum and the elements of the P.Y.P supports the teaching of building social relationships, self-managing my emotions and myself as a learner and putting our values in action through how we behave. The fifth element of the PYP is action and this is the deep learning in responsible behaviour through responsible action.

Section 4.

Footscray Primary School No. 253

STATEMENTS OF VALUES

PROMOTING HEALTHY, SAFE AND RESPECTFUL SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Footscray Primary recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

This Statement of Values sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Our Statement of Values acknowledges that parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

RESPONSIBILITIES

AS PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL LEADERS, WE WILL:

- Work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe conduct is expected of everyone.
- Behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide inclusive, safe and orderly environments.
- Plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students in attendance at the school is protected.
- Identify and support students who are or may be at risk.
- Do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential.
- Work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Respond appropriately when inclusive, safe or orderly behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required.
- Make known to parents the school's communication and complaints procedures.
- Ask any person who is acting in an offensive or disorderly way to leave the school grounds.

AS TEACHERS AND ALL NON-TEACHING STAFF, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession.
- Proactively engage with parents about student outcomes.
- Work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs.
- Communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect.

AS PARENTS, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to our child.
- Ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- Take an interest in our child's school and learning.
- Work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child.
- Communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns.

- Support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.
- Follow the school's complaints processes if there are complaints.
- Treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

AS STUDENTS, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to other students.
- Comply with and model school values.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
- Actively participate in school.
- Not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.
- Utilise the school's communications policy to communicate with the school.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT WILL:

- Provide support and advice to principals to equip them to manage and respond to challenging behaviour of students, parents and staff.
- Provide practical guidance and resources to support schools to manage and respond to challenging behaviour of students, parents and staff.
- Provide practical guidance and resources to support schools respond to and prevent bullying and promote cyber-safety and wellbeing.
- Provide access to evidence based resources and strategies to increase student safety, wellbeing and engagement.
- Provide schools with practical and legal support as required.
- Provide parents with practical guidance and resources to resolve conflicts with the school.

CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILING TO UPHOLD THE STATEMENT OF VALUES UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Behaviours that are considered inappropriate on and adjacent to school grounds or in relation to school business and that do not uphold the principles of this Statement of Values include when a person:

- is rude, aggressive or harasses others
- sends rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- is manipulative or threatening
- speaks in an aggressive tone, either in person or over the telephone
- makes sexist, racist or derogatory comments
- inappropriately uses social media as a forum to raise concerns/make complaints against the school
- is physically intimidating, e.g. standing very close.

CONSEQUENCES

Principals are responsible for determining what constitutes reasonable and unreasonable behaviour.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this Statement of Values may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences. This may include:

- utilising mediation and counselling services
- alternative communication strategies being applied
- formal notice preventing entry onto school premises or attendance at school activities. Written notice will follow any verbal notice given.
- an intervention order being sought
- informing the police which may result in a charge of trespass or assault

By agreeing to meet specified standards of positive behaviour, everyone in our school community can be assured that they will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, this will help to create a school that is safe and orderly, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

This policy was ratified at School Council in 2015. This policy will be reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee in 2018



FOOTSCRAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Positive Behaviours Essential Agreement



Rationale

At Footscray Primary School we believe all students, staff and parents have the right to feel safe. Our school believes that all members of the school community have a right to be:

- treated with dignity and justice;
- safe and secure;
- learn and develop to their full potential unhindered by anti-social behaviour;
- and made aware of the consequences for their actions.

Purpose

To provide the school community with guidelines which promote and support safe playground and learning environments.

Objectives

1. Students behave positively when they know what is expected of them, and when they feel safe, and know that someone believes in them and cares about them and their learning. Great teachers and great teaching make a significant difference to how students behave and learn.
2. Positive behaviour doesn't just happen. Students need to know the expectations and what positive behaviour looks like. These expectations will be displayed in every classroom for the classroom and playground.
3. Effective consequences have been agreed upon by staff and are gradual, natural and logical and maintain the dignity of the students.
4. Footscray Primary School is an internationally minded community that promotes positive and inclusive relationships. Social and emotional learning skills are explicitly taught to support our students to develop positive and caring relationships in order to support them to become responsible global citizens. The elements of the Primary Years Programme (P.Y.P attitudes, Learner Profile and Transdisciplinary Skills) provides a framework for an authentic context to teach these skills.

Implementation

1. At the beginning of every school year teachers develop essential agreements with their students. See Appendix 1A for examples of the process used to develop these across the school. As a class we need to revisit essential agreements regularly with our students. Included is a list of effective classroom management strategies to support positive behaviours at F.P.S in Appendix 1B.
2. Teachers at our school have provided some examples of effective strategies to track classroom behaviour and where a student is on the hierarchy of consequences. Students are more motivated to behave well when they know what is expected of them and when they can track this against a goal based on high expectations.
3. Teachers in every classroom unpack with their students: What does it mean to be safe? What does it mean to be responsible? What does it mean to be respectful? What does it mean to be a learner? In 2014 this was done with every student at every year level. Staff brought what the students identified and analysed and synthesised to develop 'The Positive Behaviours Matrix'. This is revisited at the start of every school year. See Appendix 2
4. In establishing consequences at F.P.S, you will want to take into account what characteristics make some consequences more effective than others. First the degree of consequences should increase gradually progressing from less severe to more severe as the misbehaviour is repeated. Consequences should also be natural and/ or logical. Consequences should also maintain the dignity of the student. See Appendix 3 for examples developed by teachers in 2015.
5. F.P.S is a KidsMatter school. We understand that social and emotional learning skills can be taught and learnt through a whole school approach. In 2015 we will build an understanding of the five social and emotional competencies and the best way for students to learn these skills. A scope and sequence will be developed to support staff will identifying essential skills for students to learn.

Evaluation

- Staff reflect on the teaching of social and emotional learning through their reflections when completing the P.Y.P planner.
- Students and parents will complete surveys their perceptions about whether our school is a safe environment.

Appendix 1A: Examples of Essential Agreements developed at Footscray Primary School



In a P.Y.P school every class, every team and the whole school has an essential agreement. The essential agreement sets the tone for collaboration and teamwork.

10 ways to create a meaningful class agreement...

1. Don't start till you've spent some time establishing your own **beliefs about learning**.
2. Have the kids consider **what helps them learn and what hinders their learning**. ([Details here](#))
3. Begin with **what the learners value** or the **school values**. ([Example here](#))
4. Have kids unpack your school's **learning principles** as a starting point. (I haven't tried that yet, but [here are ours](#).)
5. Base it on a common set of qualities, such as the **IB Learner Profile**. ([Staff example here](#))
6. Use a 'place mat' activity so students have time to **think individually, before seeking consensus**. ([Details here](#))
7. Have kids think about what learning '**looks like**', '**sounds like**' and '**feels like**'.
8. **Take your time**. Build the agreement gradually, to ensure understanding and ownership.
9. Include photos and descriptions for younger learners, to elaborate on the words.
10. **Live it, don't laminate it**. Revisit the agreement often and adjust as required.

An example from Year 5-6

Flat chat around 'Be statements'

What do these statements mean to you?

Use learner profile and attitudes to assist you with you

BE RESPECTFUL

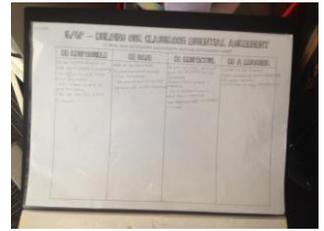


BE RESPONSIBLE
BE SAFE
BE A LEARNER

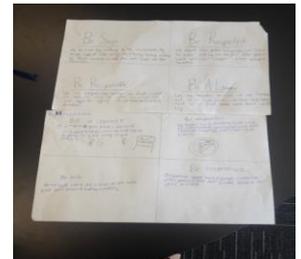
) LI: What does an effective and inclusive learning environment need?

Re visit F.P.S Positive behavior matrix

Use individual responses and peer responses from the flat chat and the statements from the F.P.S behavior matrix to document five main ideas that fit under each 'Be statement'



2b) In groups students combine their statements to complete one description for each 'be statement.'



2c) Whole class – combine 'Be statements' from all groups and agree on our class descriptor for what it means to be respectful, be responsible, be safe, be a learner. (This forms Part A of the essential agreement)

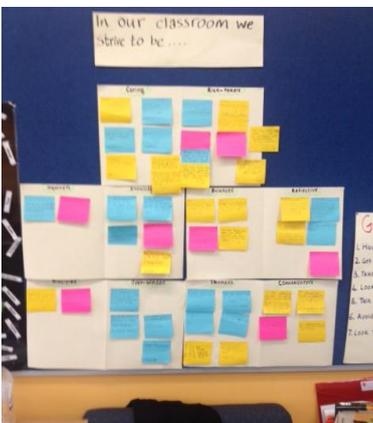
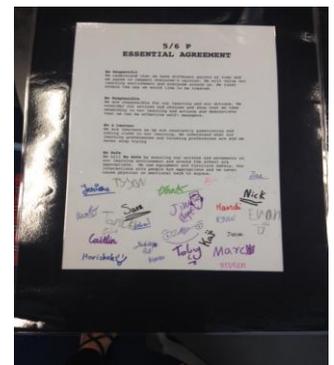
PART B – Linking our Essential Agreement to the Learner Profile

3a) In our classroom we strive to be...

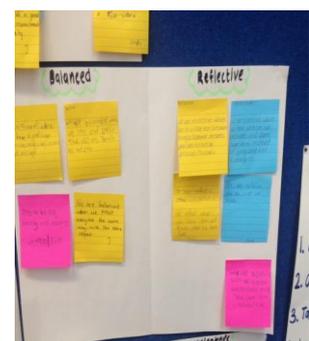
Students unpack what each of the learner profile attributes are.

What does it mean to be Caring, Reflective Open- minded, an Inquirer, Knowledgeable, Balanced, and Principled?

Document student responses on sticky notes.



3b) Collate responses and use under learner profile descriptors in our essential agreement. (Part B – In our classroom we strive to be)



Appendix 1B: Classroom Strategies that should be emphasised in every classroom.

15 Classroom Management Strategies that should be emphasised in every classroom.

Strategy	Description
1. Increase ratio of positive to negative teacher to student interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 4 to 1 • Positive interaction every 5 minutes • Follow correction for rule violation with positive reinforcer for rule following
2. Actively supervise at all times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move continuously • Scan consciously and overtly, even when you are conferring • Interact positively and frequently • Positively reinforce rule following behaviours.
3. Positively interact with all students during the lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make physical, verbal and visual contact. Eg. scan faces in classroom, make eye contact, move towards the student • Group vs individual • Instructional vs social
4. Manage minor (low intensity/frequency) problem behaviours positively and quickly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signal occurrence • State correct response • Ask student to restate or show • Disengage quickly and early
5. Follow school procedures for problem behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be consistent • See consequences section of appendix for guidelines and examples • Develop a management plan to support positive behaviour
6. Conduct smooth and efficient transitions between activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach the routine for movement around school or packing up to be ready for the next session.eg (move in a safe, calm and quiet manner) • Engage student immediately
7. Be prepared and organised for each session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate our practice so children are challenged. • Provide time for extra practise if needed and a challenge there for students who need this. • Know desired learning intentions • Have materials readily available for students
8. Begin every lesson with clear explanation of learning intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set learning objectives that are specific but not restrictive • Communicate the learning objective to students • Connect the learning objective to previous and future learning. • Engage students to set personal learning objectives.
9. Provide Quality Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback that addresses what is correct and elaborates with regard to providing feedback • Provide feedback appropriately in time to meet student's needs. • Provide feedback that is criterion referenced • Engage students in the feedback process.
10. Success Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop with the students through inquiry the success criteria for students. • Identify the knowledge, skills and understandings students need to develop to be successful. • Models of exemplars for student analysis are presented. Develop checklists for students to use to monitor and track their success.
11. Engage students in active learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write • Verbalise through strategies such as turn and talk. • Participate through cooperative learning • Use tools such as technology so students create, analyse, evaluate and inquire.
12. End activity with specific feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the lesson structure and reflect on the learning. • Provide specific feedback around key strategies, observations what you saw to promote good learning (connect to learner profile and PYP Attitudes.)
13. Develop a visual tracking system to support students to track and monitor their behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Lights • Magic 1 2 3
14. Routines established so students understand the expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entering and exiting classrooms • Working in groups • Working independently • Use of anchors charts as a reference for learning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locating and using equipment
15. Positive climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate expectations for effort and achievement• Safe, orderly and focused classroom environment for learning• Essential Agreement developed collaboratively with students (stated positively, succinctly and in observable terms); made public , enforced and taught)• High expectations for student learning

This Essential Agreement was developed with staff during 2015. This is reviewed with staff at the beginning of each school year.