Latrobe Special Developmental School
Student Engagement Policy
2010-2012

1. School Profile Statement

Latrobe SDS is the only school that provides a comprehensive curriculum for students with moderate to severe intellectual and associated disabilities between the ages of 4.8 and 18 years who reside in Latrobe City. The school is located in Traralgon and has an enrolment for 2009 of 68 students. The school currently has a number of economically disadvantaged students with an SFO (Student Family Occupation) index of 0.68. The school is committed to providing a centre of excellence in the Special Education field within the Latrobe Valley network and wider Gippsland Region. Latrobe SDS provides a specialised and challenging education in a safe and supportive environment where independence is encouraged in order to lead to fulfilling lives where students are valued members of society. The school’s motto is “Towards Independence” personal independence and a valued lifestyle is strongly promoted for students. Latrobe SDS develops collaborative partnerships with all members of the school and wider community for the benefit of its students. The core values of Respect, Trust and a Positive Learning Environment are the central component to the School Values Wheel developed to promote pride in our school. These values are central to the work undertaken in the school on a daily basis. Teaching and learning takes place in a specialist setting that is well equipped to meet our students multiply disabilities. The class rooms are surrounded by sensory and attractive gardens, shaded specialist playing and outdoor seating areas. The School has multi sensory rooms, a new Hydrotherapy Spa and Interactive Whiteboards in all classes. All students at the school have an Individual Learning Plan which is developed in consultation with families, the student and school staff including the teacher and Allied Health team. The school prides itself on the life skills and communication programs implemented for the students. Families are well supported by the School Chaplain and staff through offers of assistance to source appropriate agencies services for their child. The school focuses strongly on the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program and teaching of expected behaviours – Show Respect, Act Safely and Try Our Best.

2. Prevention Statement

Preventative School Culture

Latrobe Special Developmental school offers an effective learning environment for the specific needs for students with significant intellectual and associated difficulties. Our school encourages parents, staff and carers to work collaboratively in planning educational and developmental programs for students. Student Support Groups are established for each student and emphasise the co-responsibility of home and school in sharing the learning process. The partnership of home and school is exemplified by the high level of day to day contact via telephone, communication books, meetings and the positive way in which parents have always been encouraged to participate in their children’s education. We encourage parents and caregivers to be involved in our school community and this is reflected in regular parent social mornings, barbecues, craft mornings (outside of the school) and fathers’ nights which have all become part of our school culture as well as the invaluable support that is provided through our school chaplain who has
adopted a proactive approach with families developing family support plans and one to one counselling.

Building and maintaining relationships with members of the wider school community is an integral part of our school. We have a wide group of committed volunteers, links with local schools from both the public and private sector where students visit and participate in joint programs, many work experience students from secondary and post secondary options, allied health and medical students and links with service providers and service groups. The Gippsland Specialist Schools network is a strong collegiate group having several joint activities throughout the course of the year.

**Prevention Programs**

Latrobe Special Developmental schools focus on School Wide Positive Support has established a school climate that creates positive regard and engagement. School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program helps provide a more predictable school and classroom environments through the establishment of school wide expectations of all members of the school community and the implementation of school wide behaviour management strategies that focus on empowerment rather than control. The school has 3 clearly defined expectations (Show Respect, Act Safely, Try Our best) which are directly taught across the school and supported with a variety of reward systems to reinforce correct behaviours. (See attached matrix).

Through the introduction of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program a whole school approach to student engagement has supported staff and students across the school. The use of “Stop Think, Do” program gives students strategies to manage their own behaviour and make the right choices

Pro-active behaviour management strategies –

- Social skills programs -“Stop, Think, Do”; Cool dudes
- School wide rewards systems (Aussie of the month, raffles),
- Picture Exchange Communication System
- Social Stories
- Electronic communication Devices
- Explicit teaching of school expected behaviours.
- Boys/Girls Group
- Liaise with parents – communication books, SSG’s, phone calls
- Absence notes
- Student management issues discussed at Wellbeing meetings
- Visual Schedules
- Behaviour Scripts

Innovative programs that engage students, cognitively, behaviourally and emotional include

- Senior and Middle Years Elective Program
- Play skills
- Work experience
- Advance
- Sailability
- Community Access
- Communication Skill development – PECS, 9 Critical Communication Skills
- Programs to support attendance (breakfast club)
- Emotional Intelligence
- Social Skills groups
- Bluearth, Swimming and Brain Gym
- Allied Health Programs

Innovative teaching
- Team work/teaching
- Allied health support
- Technology
- Professional development
- Strength based teaching

3. Rights and Responsibilities

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006) outline a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees to act compatibly with human rights and to consider them when making decisions and delivering services.

LSDS complies with Government Acts – (Equal Opportunity, etc) Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is sage, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Latrobe Special Developmental School complies with the Equal Opportunity Act(1995), The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act( 2006)
(See attached References)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students have the Right:</th>
<th>Students have a Responsibility :</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To feel supported and safe</td>
<td>• To show respect, courtesy and honesty, to themselves and others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have a positive learning environment</td>
<td>• To try their best</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To be treated with respect, courtesy and honesty and as an individual</td>
<td>• To attend school</td>
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Parents have a right:
- To expect their child to be educated
- To be treated with respect, courtesy and honesty
- To be informed of their child’s progress
- To be heard in appropriate forums on matters relating to the rights of their child to receive an appropriate education

Parents have a Responsibility:
- To support their child’s attendance at school
- To be respectful, courteous and honest
- To communicate with school
- To present a positive view of school
- To show respect to the school including staff, other students, building and resources
- To share information about their child

Staff have a Right:
- To a Safe teaching environment
- To be treated with respect by peers, students, families and community members
- Be informed (within privacy requirements) of matters relating to a student that will affect the teaching and learning program.
- To be supported by others
- To feel valued regardless of their position within the school
- To a debriefing process

Staff have a Responsibility:
- To create a positive and engaging learning environment for all students
- To assess and report on student progress
- To communicate positively with parents/families, peers and community
- To model respectful, courteous and honest behavior.
- Work as a team
- To participate in professional development
- To maintain confidentiality

**Bullying and Harassment**
Latrobe Special Developmental School seeks to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination act and the Victorian equal Opportunity Act.
Definitions
Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person. Harassment is usually directed at a person because of gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.
Bullying is a repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.
Cyber bullying is a form of bullying which is carried out through internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It also includes bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It also may involve text or images (photos, drawings).
Example of cyber bullying behaviour include-
- Teasing and being made fun of
- Spreading rumours online
- Sending unwanted messages
Defamation
Response to harassment, bullying and cyber bullying
If you are being harassed or bullied you should tell the person you don’t like what they are doing and you want them to stop (use of “Stop, Think, Do” to highlight what is bullying). If any member of the school community sees or is aware of another person being harassed, bullied or cyber bullied they should take the appropriate action. This is being proactive in letting a teacher, Coordinator or senior staff member know about the situation. It is not acceptable for bystanders to do nothing about bullying and harassment.
All concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated with confidentiality.

4. Shared Expectations

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that all community members are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school and can engage effectively in learning and experience success.

Latrobe Special Developmental school utilises a “Values Wheel’ which was developed in 2006 and encompasses the shared expectations and values of the school. The wheel focuses on the three core values of respect, trust and positive learning environment which will be evident in the students, staff and families attitudes and behaviours. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and their families that come to our community form a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.
(See attached Values wheel)

5. Actions and Consequences

Latrobe Special Developmental School takes a whole school approach to promoting positive behaviours, building social skills, enhancing student and teacher relationships and creating an environment in which the entire school community can feel safe, secure and supported and catered to meet individual needs.

Staged approach

In class – discuss school rules
- Use of cool dudes program
- Rewards systems – e.g star charts, raffle, etc
- Explicit teaching of expected behaviours
- Understanding of triggers/whispers – use of behaviour management plans

Within Unit – support to manage behaviour
- Use of Functional Behavioural Analysis
- Whole unit celebration, rewards
- Whole School Celebrations
- Discuss behaviour management plans
- Allow discussion time with in meetings

Leadership
- Acknowledgment of Good Behaviour (stickers, rewards, praise)
- Withdrawn from class
- Parent/Caregivers involvement
- Use of outside agencies – BIST, etc

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Behaviour</th>
<th>Inappropriate Behaviour</th>
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<td>Appropriate behaviour will be recognised by:</td>
<td>• Talking to the student and referring them to the shared expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Praise and Acknowledgment</td>
<td>• Discussing appropriate behaviours in the classroom</td>
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<td>• Celebration assemblies</td>
<td>• Use of school chaplain</td>
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<td>• Raffle tickets</td>
<td>• Use of social stories</td>
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<td>• Newsletters</td>
<td>• Contact with parents</td>
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<td>• Positive feedback</td>
<td>• Making changes to the student’s learning program to better equip him/her to behave positively</td>
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<td>• Awards ceremonies</td>
<td>• Use of stop think do/Cool dudes program</td>
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<td>• Individual Rewards</td>
<td>• Behaviour Management Plan developed</td>
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<td>• Social Stories</td>
<td>• Counselling</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Appropriate behaviours taught and agreed to.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Withdraw privileges;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Withdraw student temporarily from class</td>
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Withdraw group from student
Hold Student support group meetings
Negotiate alternative programs or as a matter of last resort, suspension or expulsion.

Ongoing Behaviour issues
Where students exhibit ongoing behaviour patterns; as part of staged response a range of strategies will be used. These may include:

Discussing the behaviour problems and reaching an agreement for future behaviour
Explicit Teaching and rewarding of appropriate behaviours.
Ongoing monitoring, providing feedback and evaluating strategies/ plans
Time out allowing students a “Cooling Off” period
Withdrawal a student may be withdrawn from an activity, class, camp or excursion due to inappropriate behaviour and provided with an alternative educational setting within the school.
Behaviour Management plans developed
Counselling for individuals in order to modify inappropriate behaviour
Discipline/Student Support Group Meeting involving parents/caregivers and/or relevant DET support staff, Outside Agencies to assist with modifying behaviour
Suspension & Expulsion: For serious disciplinary measures we follow DEECD Engaging Schools are Effective Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines 2009 developed in response to Ministerial Order No.184
(See also attached General Procedure for Dealing with Problem Behaviours)

References
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<th>Topic</th>
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