

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

Rationale:

Boolarra Primary School believes that the student should be at the centre of all learning. This belief has implications as to how our teachers should teach and how our children should learn. The culture of the school is a critical factor that needs to be acknowledged. We focus on the relationship that exists between what our teachers do, what our children do and the learning tasks provided in and out of classrooms. The school understands the importance of parents in the learning relationship and strives to develop parent input, relationship and knowledge.

The school will:

- Implement programs in accordance with Education Department requirements
- Follow the planning outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Provide the resources and equipment required to conduct specified programs such as “Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships”.
- Provide program budgets for Literacy, Numeracy, the Arts, General Studies, Physical Education, Digital Technologies, Student Welfare & Management and Professional Development and designate coordinators for these budget areas.
- Review performance each year in student learning data with regard to strengths, areas of concerns and recommendations for improvement, and act upon the latter where possible.
- Ensure that staff has the opportunity to undertake relevant and useful Professional Development within budget constraints.
- Utilise internal expertise and neighbouring schools to share and support the collective shared learning of staff.
- Ensure that staff receive at least the minimum of 2 & 1/2 hours of Non Face to Face time (or their time fraction equivalent).
- Train students in the Peer Mediation program (provision of this to be reviewed with new Principal).
- Implement a Performance Review procedure that ensures all staff meet one on one with the principal to discuss individual teaching and learning goals and career aspirations at least once a year.

The teachers will:

- Adhere to the VIT Standards of Professional Practice as outlined at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers>
- Attend school at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of classes and 15 minutes after. In addition to this, put in the required time for effective planning and organization of their teaching programs.
 - Staff member to be present at school from 8 am as students arrive on school buses.
- Make sure that they get to know all of the children in their care, their interests, talents, etc making every effort to achieve rapport with all students in their care.
- Actively involve students in their learning.
- Ensure that the learning intent is explicit and known by students.
- Not interact with students or current parents on social media such as Facebook or Twitter (unless there are social connections out of school).
- Encourage children to attend regularly by providing an engaging classroom program.

- Ensure that the classroom environment is safe, attractive and stimulating.
- Utilise the Victorian Curriculum to develop written planning for weekly classroom program, overview of term themes and a timetable that is displayed and readily accessible in the classroom.
- Use a range of assessment tools as per our school Assessment Schedule to ensure that all students' performance is accurately monitored and that the learning tasks provided are at the appropriate level to challenge and build on students' development.
- Accommodate the individual learning needs of all students in their care, ensuring that all learning styles are catered for.
- Provide success indicators for tasks so students can be actively and constructively involved in measuring their performance. Where appropriate students are to be involved in setting and reviewing learning goals linked to their performance.
- Ensure that meaningful and feedback and recognition of student growth is consistently provided.
- Implement school-wide programs such as the RR & RR and reinforce the learnings from these programs in the day to day operation of their classroom.
- Follow up on incidents of classroom and play-ground misbehaviour and bullying survey data ensuring that both victims and offenders receive counselling and appropriate sanctions if required.
- Discuss Yard Behaviour concerns at staff meeting to promote a consistent response.
- Advise parents of concerns regarding students' academic and / or social development or behaviour.
- Attend staff and professional development meetings.
- Ensure that excursions etc are noted on the planning calendar in the staffroom, on the Department Activity notification site, the bus booking form, and included in the forthcoming events section of the Newsletter well in advance. Provide the office manager with copies of all general notices etc sent home with students.
- Engage in transition programs as required i.e. pre-school, secondary college and special school settings.

****The students will be encouraged to:**

- Attend school every day and be punctual.
- Have input into the rules and expectations that are established in the classroom.
- Follow the school and classroom rules.
- Always try to complete tasks to the best of their ability.
- Listen carefully to others and ask for clarification if they don't understand.
- Set goals to bring about improvement and actively work to achieve these
- Let the teacher know if they don't know the purpose behind a learning task or if they feel they are not 'wobbling' enough at school.
- Persevere when tasks are challenging.
- View identifying and correcting mistakes as a positive learning opportunity
- Ask for help or learning prompts when this is required.
- Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- Show empathy and care for others.
- Ask other students why they are doing or saying things that hurt their feelings
- Use Peer Mediation when this is appropriate.
- Report incidents of concern to yard duty teacher or classroom teacher or any available staff member.
- Speak up if they see something that they think is wrong
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Ensure that Newsletters, Diaries and notices to and from parents are passed on.

** A copy of this will be provided to all new students and their parents each year and to the school community via the Newsletter and displayed with and linked to the core values, so they are aware of this expectation. A copy of the Student Learning Agreement sent out for grade 2-6 students is appended.

The Learning Environment

Our learning environment is shaped by a belief that learning is best done when working collaboratively- whether that be children working with children or teachers working with teachers.

The environment will acknowledge that children will be moving around the classroom as their learning requires them to work on different tasks and with different people.

The learning taking place will be underpinned and supported by the availability of high quality Digital Technologies and an acknowledgement that children and teachers can learn how best to use these tools together.

Visual Cues and Learning Artefacts also play an important part in learning. Teachers will actively promote critical thinking and reflectiveness in each classroom, allowing the children to deeply consider their attitude and the skills and knowledge they believe is required of them at a given time. Students will receive feedback and be encouraged to reflect on their learning choices and their willingness to take risks as a learner.

Learning goals for children and learning progress will also be displayed, promoting continuous growth as a learner by being able to visually see their learning journey and where it is taking them.

Desired student behaviours will be linked to the 4 core values, RRRR and celebrated and reinforced with post cards.

The Teacher

Given that we want reflective, resourceful, resilient learners who can work successfully with others or by themselves, the range of teaching behaviours in this process is important. The classroom becomes a place where students engage together creatively as researchers in their own learning.

<i>Refer to HITS here!</i>				
<i>Add link</i>				

The Students

Resilience

- is being ready, willing and able to lock onto learning
- Knowing how to work through difficulties when the pressure mounts or the going gets tough.

Resourcefulness

- is being ready, willing and able to learn in different ways-using both internal and external resources effectively,
- Calling on different ways of learning as appropriate.
- Part of this is to recognise and reduce distractions.
- We question, imagine, reason, capitalise and make links in our learning.

Reflectiveness

- is being ready, willing and able to become more strategic about learning-
- Taking a; longer term view by planning, taking stock, and drawing out our experiences as a learner to get the best out of ourselves.
- We know ourselves as learners and can talk about our learning process.

Reciprocity

- is being ready, willing and able to learn alone or with other people
- using a sense of independent judgement
- together with skills in communication and empathy.

The Learning Task

Challenge is the central theme to all learning because without challenge there is no need for feedback, and without feedback there is very little reflective thought or any real sense of achievement or learning. As much as possible, learning tasks should be challenging for all children and allow the children to 'wobble'. In order for challenge to be authentic it needs to:

- Create cognitive conflict- deliberate placing of obstacles in the way of learners
- Benchmark to challenging goals- learning intentions and success criteria should identify learning goals that are so challenging they encourage persistence and hard work.
- Differentiate- the zone of proximal development (the difference between 'present' and 'potential' levels of development) is different for each student.
- Be part of a community of enquiry- it will be less threatening when encountered as part of a group.
- Allow for thinking- this means teachers giving greater 'wait' or thinking time after a question has been asked before seeking a response.

Application

- Attitudes- positive attitudes towards learning, including curiosity and persistence. These attitudes should be discussed and displayed in every classroom.
- Skills- abilities to carry out those processes necessary for gaining understanding, taking part in dialogue and achieving excellent performance in any given field.
- Knowledge- familiar with information, concepts, theories and practices in a given field.

To develop application in every student the school will:

- Use a variety of strategies to increase students' desire to learn.
- Use the curriculum as a context for learning how to learn
- Identify learning related goals
- Teach attitudes, as well as skills and knowledge
- Preview and review learning
- Encourage an openness to learning and critical thinking
- Foster the growth and development of every student
- Create rich feedback cultures
- Model growth mindsets

Feedback

Feedback should provide information relating to the task, or to process, that helps students move towards their learning objectives. It is one of the most powerful influences on learning ***only if it:***

- Relates to clear and specific goals
- Stimulates a thoughtful, pro-active response on the part of the learner

- Allows for learning from mistakes, rather than fearing them.

At its best, it will take place *during the learning process* rather than at the end of it. We believe that children learn much more by being shown how to improve this time than being given suggestions for what to do next time. Feedback needs to be timely so that students remember the decisions they made about their learning and the reasons for them. So feedback is needed after the first attempt by the student to move towards a learning goal.

Teachers will make time available to have meaningful discussions with children about their progress toward agreed to learning goals. The feedback will pertain to performance and effort rather than focusing on the child or the individual- hence we want children to hear ‘lovely reading’ (and why it is lovely) rather than ‘lovely reader’. It will also focus on progress rather than ability.

We expect feedback to be formative- this is assessment that is ongoing, diagnostic and helps students to make progress in their learning. Formative assessment provides explanation and elaboration when given correctly as reflected in phrases such as:

- You answer was incorrect because.....
- Your answer suggests you forgot to..... Next time, concentrate on.....
- Your answer was spot on. A key to this was..... *add feedback types from Nottingham*

Feedback needs to be ongoing and part of every lesson we teach. If we provide formative feedback we cannot give too much of it.

Children have an equally important role in feedback. To teach children how to provide feedback on their own performance and others’ performance we need to create opportunities for self reflection. Teachers will help in this process by providing opportunities for reflection and the development of meaningful learning goals.. We can also help the children become more knowledgeable about themselves as a learner by asking questions that get them to think about their learning: What helps you learn? What helps you concentrate? How do you know when you have made progress? What could I/you do to help you learn even more?

Thinking

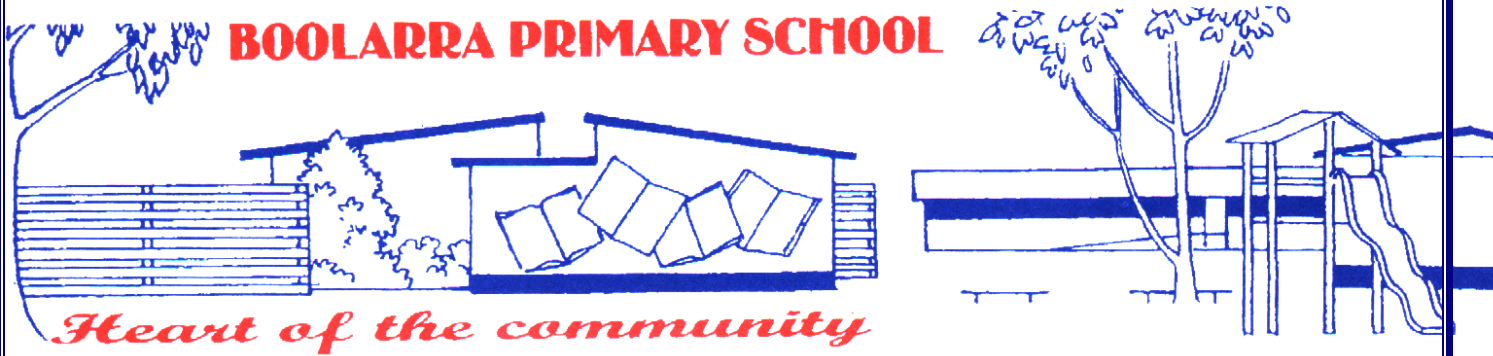
Teachers will promote the explicit identification of thinking skills and processes used.

Each year, students will be asked to record answers to “What am I doing when I’m thinking?”. The information obtained will be kept in their portfolio. Students will have the opportunity to track their progress over time.

This policy is to be submitted for School Council Approval..

2018

To be reviewed by staff in early 2018



Name: _____ Grade: _____

As a Grade 2-6 student at Boolarra Primary School in 2018 I agree to:

General:

- Attend school every day, if possible, and be on time.
- Help my teacher to come up with our class rules.
- Follow the school and classroom rules.
- Come to school ready to learn!
- Share problems or worries with a “Trusted Adult”.

Working with others

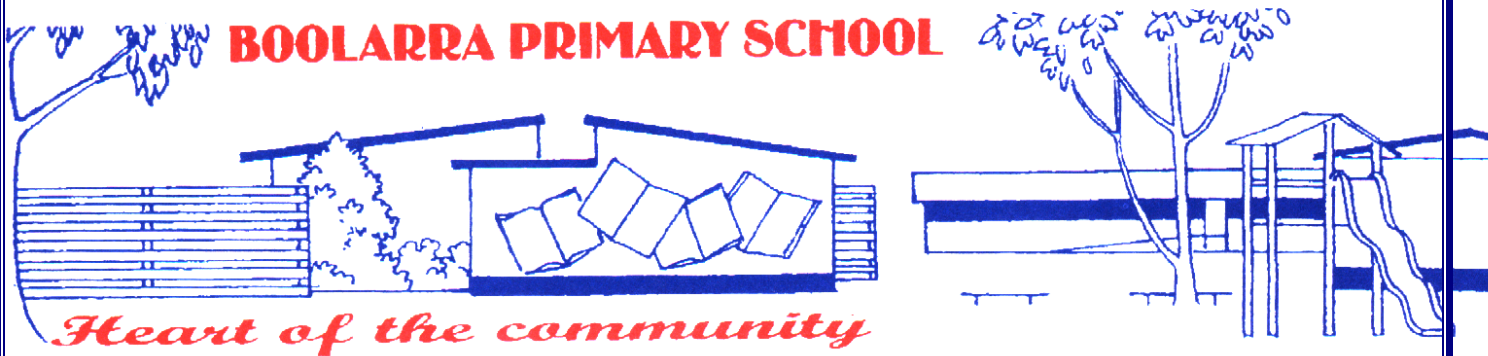
- Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- Let other students know if they are doing or saying things that hurt my feelings.
- Speak up if I see something that I think is wrong.
- Try to work well in groups. I will share turn-taking and make sure I am treating everyone fairly.
- Understand that we all learn in different ways and at different rates. It is not a competition - we are all trying our best.

Learning Habits

- Always try to finish my work and do my best.
- Listen carefully to others.
- Be happy to make mistakes – that is how we learn!
- Let my teacher/s know if I feel that I am not ‘wobbling’ enough /being challenged at school.
- Ask for help if I don’t understand what to do.
- Help my classmates to learn by being quiet and not distracting them.
- Be ready to try new things.

Responsibility

- Take responsibility for my own actions (not make excuses or blame others)
- Ensure that Newsletters, Diaries and notices to and from parents are passed on.



Student Signature: _____ Signature of Parent: _____

Date: _____

Teaching & Learning Checklist for Teachers

Have I made the learning intention clear to students?

Are my instructions clear and have I checked for understanding?

Does the task match the learning intent?

Is there scaffolding and different entry points?

Did all students appear to engage with the task?

If not, did I take action?

Was feedback given strategically and to all students?

Have I provided students with success indicators?

Was time given for students to reflect on their learning?

Did student reflection indicate growth?

Do I have a clear direction to follow in planning subsequent learning tasks?