



Gembrook Primary School

Student Agency, Voice and Leadership Policy

Rationale:

Gembrook Primary School recognises the importance of empowering students and the contribution that student voice, agency and leadership make to improve student learning outcomes, health and wellbeing. At Gembrook Primary School we are committed to providing our students with a learning environment that inspires them to be their best. An important aspect of school life at Gembrook Primary School is developing student voice and agency, enabling our students to be active contributors in their learning and decision making in our school community. As detailed in the Department of Education 'Amplify' document,

"All students are empowered to learn and achieve, experiencing high quality teaching practice and the best conditions for learning which equip them with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for lifelong learning and shaping the world around them." Victoria's Vision For Learning (Department of Education and Training, 2018)

Student voice is not simply about giving students the opportunity to communicate ideas and opinions; it is about students having the power to influence change. Authentic student voice provides opportunities for students to collaborate and make decisions with adults around what and how they learn and how their learning is assessed. This is known to lead to improved educational outcomes.

Student agency refers to the level of autonomy and power that a student experiences in the learning environment. Student voice and agency are intrinsically linked. Agency gives students the power to direct and take responsibility for their learning, creating independent and self-regulating learners.

Students will be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, to make purposeful contributions to their learning environment and to tackle issues arising in the world around them. There is strong evidence that students become more engaged in learning when they have opportunities to:

- Exercise agency in their learning
- Contribute to the communities in which they learn
- Improve the learning program for themselves and their peers.

Student voice builds resilience, adaptability, perseverance. It increases motivation and creates purpose, pride and trust in their learning environment.

Definitions:

Student Voice

Student voice is where opportunities are provided for students to collaborate and make decisions with adults around what and how they learn and how their learning is assessed.

Student Agency

Student agency gives students the power to direct and take responsibility for their learning creating independent and self-regulating learners.

Student Leadership

Student leadership is not confined to a small group of individuals as leadership potential is inherent within all learners. This includes listening to and being able to clarify issues and advocating on the behalf of the students they represent.

At **Gembrook Primary School** the following strategies are used to promote **Student Voice**:

- Provide opportunities for students to give feedback to peers.
- Provide opportunities for students to give feedback to teachers.
- Use student feedback to improve practice.
- Classroom conferences are conducted on a regular basis
- Design learning activities which link to student interests and extends learning beyond the school.
- Students assist with developing success criteria for elements of learning.
- Scope and Sequence for Literacy and Numeracy expressed as student friendly “I Can” statements which form the basis of Learning Intentions and inform students of future learning.
- Assessment and rubrics discussion between student and teacher.
- Regular conferences with students in all grades to discuss progress and set future goals.
- Parent, Student, Teacher three-way conferences.
- Students participate in gratitude, empathy and mindfulness activities where they discuss their ideas on a regular basis.
- Teachers are implementing check in and check out questions at the beginning and end of some lessons.
- Genius Hour provide learning choices for students for senior students.
- Classroom learning environment agreements established by students and teachers.
- Individual learning goals.
- Gembrook Primary School Developmental Curriculum continuum.
- Student Representative Council across all year levels.

At **Gembrook Primary School** the following strategies are used to promote **Student Agency**:

- Develop skills and competencies that assist students to set their own goals and direct their own day to day learning.
- Provide students with peer learning opportunities where they can become mentors for other students.
- Buddies program in place to promote responsibility, care and leadership.
- Student/Adult mentoring program in place for students in need.
- Behaviour Agreements and Behaviour Support Plans are agreed by teachers and student and family.
- Restorative Practices/Conferencing allow all students to have their voice heard.
- Quiet yard spaces provided for students.
- Open library at lunch times.
- Wellbeing practices embedded throughout the school as part of curriculum following on from the GEM program which included regular checking in with students, our wellbeing officer and scheduled classroom activities.

At **Gembrook Primary School** the following strategies are used to promote **Student Leadership**:

- Challenge students to extend their comfort zone and acknowledge when students accomplish this.
- Acknowledge students who set a good example to others.
- Establish groups with explicit leadership roles e.g. Student Representative Council, roles within the classroom, Student Leadership Group including School Captains and House Captains.
- Students encouraged to be learning experts- using your classmates as a teacher in the class.
- Grade 6 students organise and lead whole school assemblies.
- Gembrook Primary School values, Respect and High Expectations form the basis of expectations across the school and these can be articulated by all students. Students make each other accountable to these values.
- Community/family days lead by students to showcase work and what the school has to offer.
- Student body (grade 6 students) to take tours of the school with principal to talk to perspective families. Student leaders give a student perspective on the school to new families.
- Student lead activities ran at lunch times (Soccer, cricket, basketball)
- Students raise funds and decide how that money should be spent through an active SRC.

Evaluation:

- To be reviewed as part of three-year cycle.

References:

Amplify- Empowering students through voice, agency and leadership (DET 2018)