STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ROCKS

Every Child, Every Opportunity
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Ipswich North State School is committed to ensuring that all children and young people, regardless of their circumstances and background, have the opportunity to participate and engage in a world class education system and emerge equipped with the knowledge and skills they need for secondary schooling.

Ipswich North strongly believes we all have a collective responsibility for the learning and wellbeing outcomes of the children and young people in our communities. It is essential that school communities, in particular, understand the diversity of their students and families and offer a responsive and inclusive place for all.

The Ipswich North State School Student Engagement Policy supports our school in creating a positive school culture in which students believe that their differences, ideas, needs and beliefs are valued and respected. Holding high expectations of students not only encourages them to achieve their best at school and in their lives away from the school grounds but will also support them to be independent, happy, healthy and resourceful lifelong learners.

Sasha Robinson
Acting Principal
The Ipswich North State School Student Engagement ROCKS (SER) policy is one of the key elements of the Closing The Gap initiative at Ipswich North. SER articulates the community’s shared expectations in the areas of student engagement and supports school initiatives and programs, Education Queensland policies and National Frameworks in the one document.

The attendance goals and targets set by the school in SER are designed to reflect the school’s overall vision and values of education and the importance of being in their learning environment every day. SER was developed in consultation with representatives from all areas of the school community with the principal responsible for leading the development and implementation of the policy.

The overarching focus for the SER was developing a positive and effective school culture where students viewed Ipswich North as their workplace or place of employment and that attending school every day was the same as attending their job every day. To achieve this goal, all staff and community members discussed what the community opinion of the school was and how valued education was in the homes of our students. School Opinion Survey data was also utilised.

The outcome was the development of the SER and the collective approach to building and sustaining a positive and engaging school culture for Ipswich North State School.

A Positive and Engaging School Culture

Ipswich North recognises that we are preparing young people for their adult lives. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s International Commission identifies learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be as the pillars of learning for the 21st century. Ipswich North focuses on the development of student social competencies by embedding such learning opportunities into their pedagogy, curriculum, behaviour management systems, expectations and structures.

A positive school culture ensures that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning.

An effective school is engaging and inclusive, recognises and responds to the diverse needs of their students, accommodates different learning profiles and rates of learning and intervenes early to identify and respond to individual student needs.

Student engagement and school connectedness underpin effective student learning at Ipswich North.

Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive.
To achieve a positive and engaging school culture at Ipswich North, we focus on:

- creating a positive school culture that is fair and respectful
- building a safe and supportive school environment
- expecting positive, supportive and respectful relationships that value diversity
- promoting pro-social values and behaviours
- encouraging student participation and student voice
- proactively engaging with parents/carers
- implementing preventative and early intervention approaches
- responding to individual students
- linking to the local community.

**Positive School Culture**

**ALL Core Learning Priorities**

**School Wide Positive Behaviour Supportive (SWPBS): ROCKS**

Ipswich North establishes positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishes a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success.

Ipswich North knows that positive relationships with teachers are important to students. Students want their teachers to recognise them as individuals, not just as learners. Acknowledging the diversity of the student population is central to the Ipswich North positive and inclusive school culture.

Engagement and wellbeing strategies are incorporated into the school ethos and curriculum, and as a result the students attend at a higher percentage and participate in a meaningful way. Ipswich North’s positive school culture is one of learning and caring which in turn, promotes student belonging and connectedness.
**A Safe and Supportive School Environment**

**School Wide Positive Behaviour Supportive (SWPBS): ROCKS**

**Responsible Behaviour Plan**

**The Code of School Behaviour – Education Queensland**

Ipswich North collaboratively develops and implements fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management systems. These whole-school systems are based on pro-social values, social competencies, incentives and positive peer relationships. At Ipswich North, respect, ownership, cooperation, kindness and safety are the core values of the school philosophy.

Well-run and democratic classrooms are central to the establishment of safe school environments at Ipswich North. Teachers in these classrooms involve and engage all students, set high expectations, seek feedback from students and conduct themselves to the Ipswich North Commitment (INC):

1. Every child will learn in exceptional ways every day at school.
2. I will make a real difference for every child.
3. Our learning vision for every child is unlimited.

The inclusion of transition programs and practices at the different stages of schooling also minimise anxiety, increase resilience and ensure that students develop a readiness to enter their new environment, and make successful transitions between year levels.

**Expecting positive, supportive and respectful relationships that value diversity**

**Supportive School environment**

**Ipswich North State School Pedagogical Framework**

Ipswich North is an inclusive school with a strong moral purpose. It is imperative that all staff, students, parents/carers and members of the whole-school community exhibit positive relationships and value difference.

Ipswich North teachers are inclusive classroom teachers who know their students and understand their learning needs. They are able to adapt current pedagogical knowledge and thinking and apply it in different ways, so that each student is engaged in meaningful learning experiences.

It is expected at Ipswich North that positive and supportive relationships which value diversity, exist between students, their peers, teachers and the whole-school community encourages students to take personal responsibility for participation in their education and enables them to provide support and model positive behaviours to other students. Ipswich North also encourages and provides 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.
Promoting pro-social values and behaviours

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support: Lesson Plans
National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools
Ipswich North State School Curriculum Framework

Ipswich North promotes and teaches pro-social values and behaviours which helps young people to engage with school, their peers, their teachers and their learning. Ipswich North’s classrooms have clear expectations of individual responsibility and foster positive relationships among students.

The Schools’ strategies to promote pro-social values are whole-school in focus and include close links with the curriculum. The Early Years Curriculum Guidelines (EYCG) of Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) includes the early learning areas of Social & Personal and Health and Physical which encourages students to work with others, and to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation at school.

In the context of the QSA and ACARA, the Ipswich North curriculum includes pro-social values and behaviours to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning,

Encourage student participation

Every Day Counts
Closing the Gap
School Opinion Survey: Students

Ipswich North encourages active and meaningful student participation by providing all students with opportunities to contribute and provide feedback to the school and the classroom. This ensures that students feel valued and empowered by giving them a voice which is ‘not simply about the opportunity to communicate ideas and opinions; it is about having the power to influence change’ (West, 2004).

The meaningful involvement of students at Ipswich North means ‘validating and authorising them to represent their own ideas, opinions, knowledge and experiences throughout education in order to improve our schools’ (Fletcher, 2005). Students at North are allowed to become active participants in their education, including involvement in decisions about what and how they learn, and how their learning is assessed.
**Proactively engaging with parents/carers**

**Parent and Community Engagement**

**School Opinion Survey: Parents**

Ipswich North openly engages all families as equal partners in the education of children and young people. All school staff contribute to the creation of a welcoming culture for parents/carers and families and in turn, the school fosters high parent/carer and family expectations for their school’s performance and school completion for their children.

Ipswich North supports families to engage in their child’s learning and build their capacity as active learners. In providing this environment, the school welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning. Ipswich North ensures that the unique experiences and skills of their students’ families enrich the learning environment and the school community.

The keys to Ipswich North’s successful partnerships with parents/carers and families include:

- ensuring all parents are aware of the school’s Student Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and student to contribute
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school.
- providing opportunities to enhance

**Implementing preventative and early intervention approaches**

**Data and Student Tracking**

**Closing the Gap**

**Every Day Counts**

Implementing preventative and early intervention strategies to support student engagement and address individual barriers to learning are a key part of our Student Engagement Policy. Prevention strategies target the whole school community and are designed to reduce any risk factors which may contribute to attendance or behavioural issues while at the same time increasing protective factors in order to support student engagement and positive behaviour. Ipswich North’s prevention strategies are based on a comprehensive knowledge of the community’s and students’ needs and therefore provide a solid platform for inclusive educational provision.

The effective early intervention strategies at Ipswich North enable early identification of vulnerable students and those at risk of disengagement from school. The monitoring of social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students allows the approaches to be evaluated and progress mapped. The foundation of an inclusive and positive school culture is a comprehensive understanding of the whole-school community and of the wellbeing and/or learning issues that students may be experiencing. Ipswich North also appreciates the potential strengths and expertise of school community members and utilises these strengths to engage with the community to build a positive school culture.
Responding to individual students

ALL Core Learning Priorities
Individual Education Plans

Ipswich North State School Individual Learning Goals

Ipswich North has comprehensive processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. Coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies utilise relevant school level or external student wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing.

At Ipswich North, early intervention is focused on groups that are at higher risk of harm or disengagement from education, and aims to improve their resilience through effective and appropriate support. Strategies are targeted at students displaying inappropriate coping skills, stress reactions, depressive symptoms and other personal and social vulnerabilities.

Research has shown that there are a number of risk factors that increase the chances of young people developing health and behaviour problems. Ipswich North is aware of and addresses these risk factors, including poor school attendance and inappropriate behaviour, while increasing the levels of protection and positive support for the student throughout the course of their development.

Linking to the local community

ALL Core Learning Priorities
School Opinion Survey: Parents

Linking with the local community provides Ipswich North with access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who provide expertise and experiences which build the capacity of schools and teachers to respond to the needs of their students. Ipswich North links with the local community due to evidence citing ‘children and young people with a meaningful connection to the broader community tend to be more resilient in the face of problems and stress’.

Partnerships between Ipswich North and community-based service providers involve an acceptance of shared responsibility for addressing common areas of concern and a collaborative approach to developing strategies to reach goals. These partnerships also provide optimum service delivery for vulnerable students.

Collaboration with other schools through network and cluster arrangements is another important way in which Ipswich North works to develop shared approaches for students at risk of disengagement.