

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING



Parents and schools have an important role to play in a child's education.

Working together improves a student's learning, health and wellbeing.

Relationships are key to working together.

Education is a shared responsibility between a family and the school.

When schools and parents engage in a child's learning, it encourages and supports students to enjoy their education.

Positive relationships and attitudes towards education give learners confidence that the system is supporting them to achieve their best.

MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

A meaningful parent-school partnership requires a joint effort and should be established as early as possible.

Schools and parents can both learn from each other in order to support the child.

Good partnerships are based on:

- open and honest communication
- trust and respect
- working together
- fair and reasonable expectations by all.

CONNECTING LEARNING

Schools play an active role in formal studies, but learning starts before a child attends school and goes beyond what happens at school.

Conversations and knowledge shared between parents and schools provide valuable understanding of what a child needs in order to develop a love of learning.

Schools and families are encouraged to take the time and to find opportunities to connect and work together on the child's progress.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strong, positive relationships between schools and families show a child that everyone is working together in their best interest.

This demonstrates the desired values to accomplish mutual respect and treat each other fairly.

WORKING TOGETHER

The best interests of the child should always be central in school and family decision making.

Working together creates a learning environment that is respectful, safe and inclusive, and builds trust and confidence for the student.

This is the best environment for successful development and wellbeing.

Occasionally, families and schools may have differing opinions.

If views are expressed respectfully, and each party has reasonable expectations, a positive outcome can be reached.

For more information on how to provide feedback, including compliments, suggestions and complaints, visit: www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/school-complaints.aspx

MEETING WITH YOUR SCHOOL

As partners in education it is helpful for families to understand their child's strengths and learning plans.

Sharing and discussing insights helps both schools and families to have a broad view of the child's progress and provide the best support for their education and wellbeing.

Conversations and meetings can be scheduled as required.

The following steps may assist discussion:

- confirm the purpose and objective of the conversation/meeting
- define any current situation for your child
- confirm the aims your child has with their education (what are their goals, what are yours?)
- identify and discuss your child's learning strengths and any challenges or barriers your child is facing
- discuss, suggest and seek what your child might need i.e. learning support or adjustments
- take the opportunity to offer constructive and respectful feedback on any suggested improvements to support families and the school for the future
- summarise the agreed actions/plans to ensure everyone has the same understanding and expectations.

STUDENT VOICE

Student voice at home and at school is positive for learning, encourages parents and carers as partners, and supports good practice. It also helps us to work together.

Students should be included in making decisions about their learning. Empowering students enhances engagement and participation in their education.

Together, we can help develop students' skills in the following areas:

- self-awareness
- communication
- problem-solving
- critical thinking and reflection
- planning and organisational
- research and consultation
- group work
- accountability.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

Schools requiring additional assistance and support can contact their local regional office: www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/regions.aspx

Parents or carers who would like support, or students requiring guidance, can contact:

Parents Victoria: a statewide organisation representing parents of students in Victorian government schools.

Visit: www.parentsvictoria.asn.au

VicSRC: the peak body representing school-aged students in Victoria.

Visit: www.vicsrc.org.au

For more information, please refer to the Department's website:

www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/Pages/default.aspx