

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES POLICY

*The Currajong School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures, and practices meet all **Child Safe Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)***

PURPOSE

The Currajong School supports a model of continuous improvement by using data and observation to inform the regular review of the teaching practices which drive curriculum selection and delivery, which impact the educational experience and achievement of students, the professional learning of staff and the culture of the School.

DEFINITION

Student learning outcomes state what students are expected to *know* or *be able to do* upon completion of a course or program. Course learning outcomes may contribute to, or map, program learning outcomes, and are required in group instruction.

At both the course and program level, student learning outcomes should be clear, observable and measurable, and reflect what will be included in the course or program requirements.

For students – an understanding of learning outcomes assists students to draw connections, enhances engagement, and allows better understanding of what they are learning and how they are being assessed.

For teaching staff - developing learning outcomes allows reflection and focus on the content of courses and informs the most useful choice of assessment tools.

For leadership – learning outcomes contribute to the development of a coherent curriculum across the school, provide data from which courses and programs can be evaluated, identify gaps or overlap in programs, and clarify instructional and school priorities.

VISION FOR LEARNING

The introduced Practice Principles for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (DET December 2018) is now the recommended approach for Victorian schools and provides a starting point for a close analysis of professional teaching practice. It assists school leadership and teachers to consider:

- what the school community and staff value
- the beliefs about learning that underpin teaching practice
- how current teaching practice helps to achieve what the School values
- how new teaching practices will help to achieve what the School values

Students are empowered to learn and achieve by experiencing high quality teacher practice and the best conditions for learning which equip them with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for lifelong learning and for shaping the world around them.

For leaders and teachers in Victorian schools the vision for learning focuses on the core values and beliefs at the centre of teaching and learning and provides the impetus for a continuing commitment to professional learning.

The nine Practice Principles for Excellence in Teaching and Learning are as follows:

1. High expectations for every student promote intellectual engagement and self-awareness
2. A supportive and productive learning environment promotes inclusion and collaboration
3. Student voice, agency and leadership empower students and build school pride
4. Curriculum planning and implementation engages and challenges all students
5. Deep learning challenges students to construct and apply new knowledge
6. Rigorous assessment practices and feedback inform teaching and learning
7. Evidence-based strategies drive professional practice improvement
8. Global citizenship is fostered through real world contexts for learning
9. Partnerships with parents and carers enhance student learning

ACHIEVING POSITIVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

At our School, the vision for learning focuses on the core values and beliefs at the centre of teaching and learning which inform the ongoing review and evaluation of the School's teaching practices. Driving awareness of improvements in teaching practice which ensure that students are engaged, challenged, and able to apply new knowledge are the following expectations of all teaching staff. These are based on Hattie's high impact teaching strategies (HITS) - 10 instructional practices that powerfully influence student learning outcomes when consistently implemented.

- Do teaching staff design clear and written goals for each lesson?
 - Inform students of the goals/expected outcomes for each lesson
 - Link concepts to students' backgrounds, past learning and key vocabulary
 - Work through all teaching steps required to ensure that goals are achieved

- Do teaching staff use explicit instruction in each lesson?
 - Tell students what they need to learn in the lesson based on what they already know
 - Show students how to complete the tasks that they are required to do
 - Ensure material is challenging relative to current mastery of the topic/task

- Do teaching staff ensure that students are on task and engaged with lesson content?
 - Actively link new information with students' prior knowledge
 - Use new information to clarify any faulty assumptions or processes
 - Ask students to recall information they have just been taught
 - Use technology/graphic organisers to demonstrate how information is connected

- Do teaching staff provide critical feedback throughout lessons?
 - Give feedback to students during engagement with new information
 - Highlight to students how they have performed and ways they could improve
 - Use two-way feedback i.e. focused questions and students' responses to determine whether material is being understood

- Do teaching staff ensure multiple exposure of new material?
 - Review/go over previously learned material to ensure it is recalled
 - Rehearse/go over new material until it is remembered and mastered
 - Allow students sufficient time to practice and succeed

- Do teaching staff check application of knowledge?
 - Guide practice in generalising knowledge beyond the topic/task at hand
 - Teach problem solving i.e. understand the problem, come up with a plan of action, implement the plan, review the results
 - Provide opportunities for students to apply general principles to specific situations

- Do teaching staff instruct students to work cooperatively with one another?
 - Structure small groups carefully and instruct students how to work within them

- *Use cooperative learning groups only after students have gained mastery of the material sufficient for them to actively and confidently participate*
- *Continue to provide opportunities for individual practice and feedback*
- *Do teaching staff ensure students develop and extend intrinsic pleasure in learning?*
 - *Commend students when it is meaningful - when they have made actual improvement and/or effort*
 - *Refer to specific achievements they have made related to the topic/task*

IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES

The following vision for learning and the Practice Principles also support school improvement that articulates how student learning will be organised, taught and assessed.

- documented curriculum plan, assessment, and shared pedagogical approaches
- school-based professional learning program developed and implemented that supports the school's identified improvement strategies
- school improvement team formed to develop, oversee and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Annual Implementation Plan
- student voice, leadership and agency in own learning activated so that students have positive school experiences and can act as partners in school improvement
- whole school approach to health, wellbeing, inclusion and engagement
- moderation of common student assessment tasks
- data collection, analysis and evaluation of student learning growth over time
- explicit use of evidenced-based school improvement strategies and teacher professional practice activities

REVIEWING THE CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PRACTICES

For two staff planning days at the commencement of the school year, as well as a staff planning day at the commencement of each term, and weekly teacher meetings, all teaching staff are involved in group level and content specific professional learning to support excellence in curriculum implementation. Professional development is also provided to teaching staff at times of change to class groups, literacy groups, numeracy groups or the implementation of new

programs. Professional development is scheduled into the weekly meeting schedule and recorded on PD Tracker.

The curriculum at The Currajong School is comprised of a set of skills, concepts and processes that students are expected to learn, and which recognises the particular needs of the student cohort. The process of curriculum and teaching practice review includes consideration of the following:

- response to the learning needs of young students presenting with significant social, emotional, behavioural disorders
- response to the learning needs of individual students and class groups
- establishment of student learning expectations in each curriculum area
- continual improvement of the curriculum to meet changing educational demands
- ensuring of consistency and progression within, between, and across class group levels and curriculum areas
- ensuring of a systemic process of teaching and learning through a scope and sequence that avoids unnecessary duplication, and provides for an effective use of resources and materials
- professional learning and resource to support new curriculum implementation

Planning for curriculum review puts in place the mechanisms to support reflection and improvement on the delivered curriculum. While assessment focuses on student learning, curriculum evaluation considers the effectiveness of the whole learning experience. Once a program or topic is in place and being delivered it may need to be refined and improved to ensure that it retains its relevance, currency and appropriateness for our school's particular student cohort.

Evaluation, like assessment, serves both summative and formative purposes, that is, to communicate the current standard of student outcomes within a topic and as a basis for improvement when students or staff use it to guide their efforts and activities in future areas of work.

When reviewing a curriculum, staff take a holistic approach and consider the connections between subjects, teaching methods and all aspects of instruction that create a learner's educational experience. Within this context, each subject curriculum bases content and skills development around age-related progression.

Our teachers embed relevant assessment strategies into their curriculum plan so they can monitor student learning and make adjustments to their teaching strategies as required. The Currajong School's assessment schedule is reviewed annually and includes both summative and formative assessments to track student learning and achievement.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES

Summative assessment is used to evaluate students' learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against a standard or benchmark.

- it takes place, not during the learning process, but after a course or unit's completion
- marks are assigned as to whether the student has reached the learning goal or not
- it includes completed topics, chapters or content areas
- it determines at a particular point in time what students know and do not know and is then used to guide the efforts and activities of teaching staff and students in subsequent work units

Summative assessment evaluates the effectiveness of programs, school improvement goals, alignment of curriculum and student placement in specific programs. Summative assessments happen too far down the learning path to make instructional adjustments and interventions *during* the learning process. Formative assessment accomplishes this.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES

Formative assessment is used to monitor students' learning to provide ongoing feedback that is then used by teaching staff to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning during the learning process.

- the purpose is to improve students' learning by providing meaningful feedback during a learning activity
- it is an ongoing evaluation which takes place throughout the learning activity and provides information on how well students are doing and which students need further assistance
- it focuses on small learning steps and not completion
- it is part of the instructional process and when incorporated into classroom practice, it provides the information needed to adjust teaching and learning *while it is happening*

In this sense, formative assessment informs both teachers and students about student understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made. These adjustments help to ensure students achieve, targeted standards-based learning goals within a set time frame.

It also assists teaching staff to recognise where students are struggling so that problems can be addressed immediately.

written or spoken summary, identify an interesting or a confusing area of the topic.

IN SUMMARY

“School improvement involves leadership, teachers, culture, resources, pedagogy and the broader school community all working in unison to change school practices in ways that lead to better student outcomes”. <https://www.acer.org/au/school-improvement>

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as per our three-year review cycle or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next review:
October 2021	School Board	October 2024



The Currajong School acknowledges the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to the Elders past, present and emerging.