

Lalor East Primary School – Values booklet and school forum

Reflection on Values Education School Forums 2005 - Gary Shaw, Values Education Contact Officer, Victoria

Lalor East Primary School is situated in an established residential area in Melbourne's northern suburbs. Lalor East has a current enrolment of 510 students with approximately 60% of students from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.

As part of a school charter review in 2003 the school leadership saw a need to change the Code of Conduct and Student Rule Book. They wanted more student and parent input and broader ownership of policies and processes governing school practice.

The staff initially developed a values-focused Code of Practice based on the 2003 Values Education Study. The school council worked closely with the staff to ensure values were representative of local and broader community values.

During 2004 the school worked on producing a booklet *Values at Lalor East Primary School*. Junior School Councillors (JSC) were elected from the Grade 5/6 classes. This team met weekly and reported back to their peers. The students audited the Code of Conduct, made decisions about what they wanted to keep and reviewed the expectations and values in each of the 23 classrooms.

The Welfare Committee, which included representatives from JSC and staff representatives from each grade area kept staff and parents informed about the progress of the booklet.

The booklet with core values of caring, respect, co-operation, honesty and personal best was presented at the school AGM in March 2005 and then at an Arabic speaking parents' forum in June. These two events represented the school's values education forum.

Throughout 2005 values education was incorporated into policy and practice. This includes:

- discipline practices related to school values
- student of the week based on school values
- a set of posters of the 5 values and what these mean in practice are displayed in each class
- posters in 5 different languages displayed in the school foyer
- values as an integral part of the weekly newsletter

The school leadership indicated that the school was only at the beginning of a cycle of change but were very positive about the impact this process has already had on the school community.