OUR CORE VALUES AT SYLVANIA HEIGHTS

Rationale:

It is vital for any organisation or community to have a clear statement of values. Values in any educational setting are demonstrated in the practices, processes and relationships that are evident to the outside observer as well to those who are part of the school community. A clear statement of values establishes a clear measure upon which behaviours and decisions can be judged. A concise statement of values establishes purpose and provides a guideline for future direction.

The staff and parents, with the assistance of the senior curriculum officer from Sutherland District Office, explored a lengthy process to clearly define the core values of Sylvania Heights Public School. This process commenced in 2002 and has been completed in 2003. This statement of values was formulated by looking at a large range of value statements that may be applicable to a school or wider community. The task was made more challenging by our endeavours to identify a small number of values that were felt to be fundamental by everyone. Not only did we seek to define our core values but also to develop statements to confirm their importance. We also briefly listed some of the behaviours that would be evident if there was a consistency between our values and our practice. These behaviours would be demonstrated by students, staff and parents.

Care

<u>*We mean:*</u>

Being emotionally and physically supported

This is important because:
- by valuing individuals we empower them to reach their full potential.
- trust allows people to thrive in a secure environment, undertaking a variety of tasks.

These are *some* of the behaviours and actions we would expect to see demonstrated at Sylvania Heights

- helping each other – staff, students and parents
- genuine warmth, concern and acceptance by all community members
- fairness, empathy and respect for individuals
- a willingness to listen to others
- flexibility in approach and response
- following of safety rules
- being courteous and respectful

Confidence/Competence

<u>*We mean:*</u>

Realistic and objective confidence that one has the skills to operate in the world of work and to feel that those skills are a positive contribution

This is important because:

- with confidence a person will take risks and be prepared to have a go with their learning and consequently will develop competence in new skills.
- with confidence, competence naturally follows.
- developing confidence and competence allows people to work together using the strengths that everyone brings to work towards the same goal.

These are *some* of the behaviours and actions we would expect to see demonstrated at Sylvania Heights

- clear organisational structures to support teaching and learning
- staff, students and parents are supportive when people pursue personal and professional goals
- active participation is entrenched in the culture of the school
- recognition of achievement is evident utilising formal and informal methods
- staff, students and parents with a clear purpose and achievable objectives
- commitment to trial and error approach in all areas of learning
- enhanced self esteem in achievement of goal(s) at individual , group and whole school levels
- valuing of different and diverse opinions
- opportunities are created to encourage the use of diverse skills by children and adults
- staff, students and parents are willing to take risks

Growth

<u>*We Mean:*</u>

The ability to enable an individual or organization to grow in all aspects of life in every way – professionally and personally.

This is important because:

- all individuals are different and opportunities need to be provided at all levels so individuals can develop socially, emotionally and academically.
- personal satisfaction is built through a love of learning about ourselves and our work.
- growth allows us to meet the emerging needs of individuals in a changing world.

These are *some* of the behaviours and actions we would expect to see demonstrated at Sylvania Heights

- a willingness to give new ideas a go without prejudice
- individual and group initiate and implement new ideas
- a personal commitment to professional development which provides new skills and information
- personal and organisational satisfaction in achievement
- opportunities for professional growth that are planned and coordinated to support agreed goals
- a genuine appreciation of the efforts demonstrated by all members of the school community
- better understanding of the roles ,responsibilities and attitudes of all members of our community
- adaptability/flexibility/responsibility

Membership

<u>We mean:</u>

Pride in belonging to and functioning as an integral part of a learning community.

This is important because:

- work is valuable and your efforts are worthwhile when you are welcomed as an integral part of the team working towards a common goal.
- everyone is contributing and appreciated.
- it is important to be part of a team and to have opinions and or ideas recognized and valued.
- we are **all** involved in something worthwhile; all value each other's contributions.
- a sense of belonging is encouraged – each individual has a valued position among classmates, colleagues, and community members.

These are *some* of the behaviours and actions we would expect to see demonstrated at Sylvania Heights

- all school community members are valued
- the school community works cooperatively towards common goals
- teamwork from all members of the community
- active participation from staff, students and parents
- people willing to have a go
- acknowledgement and support of others
- strong school spirit is evident in our celebrations, ceremonies and practices
- decision making is collaborative in nature, based on effective communication and clear procedures

Trust

<u>*We Mean:*</u>

The capacity to hear one another's thoughts and feelings actively and accurately and to express personal thoughts and feelings in a climate of mutual confidence in one another's integrity.

This is important because:

- it is important to provide security and support. People need to communicate to others in a non-threatening manner. Everyone needs to trust and be trusted – to be empathetic and sympathetic.
- it allows for further development of positive relationships.
- people become comfortable being themselves.
- it sets up a secure environment of mutual respect.
- staff, students and parents genuinely listen to each others needs and ideas
- creativity flourishes in an environment of trust

These are *some* of the behaviours and actions we would expect to see demonstrated at Sylvania Heights

- staff, students and parents demonstrate greater participation in the learning and community activities of the school
- all members communicating with openness ad confidence
- confidence in the expression of opinions ideas and feelings
- a readiness to take on tasks
- staff, students and parents feeling positive and secure (relaxed atmosphere)
- staff, students and parents sharing the responsibility to solve problems
- mutual respect/ respectful language/ good customer service
- strong policies in student welfare, OHS&R