STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers
If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the principal.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

(a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
(b) expectations for positive student behaviour
(c) support available to students and families
(d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Overport Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Overport is an inclusive school community, situated in Frankston, and is committed to providing engaging and challenging opportunities that support individuals to achieve their full potential as lifelong learners. We strive to achieve the best educational outcomes for all students. Our school is committed to work with children as individuals, adapting programs to their specific needs.

Classroom programs are designed to differentiate and support individual needs and are enriched by a number of specialist and support programs which include Health and Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Digital Technologies, STEM, LOTE (Japanese), a wellbeing program that includes a strong focus on Restorative Practices to build a strong inclusive school. The Resilience Program continues to be implemented along with Play is the Way activities within the classrooms. Further we provide support for students in literacy intervention in the LEAP –Literacy Enrichment Assistance Program, a Literacy Tutor program. Our small number of international students and students who identify as Indigenous are supported within the current class programs.

The staff are dedicated and committed to developing a learning environment which maximises the overall educational needs of our students and endeavours to achieve the best social, emotional and educational outcomes for them. Our school is committed to working with students as individuals, adapting programs to their specific needs through a differentiated approach to curriculum and instruction. Our teachers plan together in strong teams and share sound practices across and between year levels to provide continuity.

Our leadership team has a shared vision that ensures a focus on building teacher capacity and curriculum delivery. The Principal and Assistant Principals meet weekly to discuss school operations, curriculum and wellbeing. Our School Improvement Team (SIT) comprising the Principal, Assistant Principals, Learning Specialists and Passion Team leaders, meet on a regular basis to review data and discuss the various curriculum and wellbeing Action Plans along with the strategic 'Road Map' to implementing curriculum delivery and relevant changes across the school.

Our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) comprising of a year level leader and their team, meet twice a week and use data to drive effective curriculum planning. Our middle level leaders (team leaders) meet regularly to support implementation of the Action Plans and ensure continuity of program across the school. Our PCO members attend Team meetings and visit classrooms to ensure strong instructional leadership within the school. We undertake whole school professional development meetings (staff meetings) once a week and Passion Teams (curriculum teams) meetings that meet several times during the term. The Passion Teams focus is to deliver upwards of 80% of our staff professional development. This can also be said of Curriculum Days' PD. Our SSP goals are designed to improve student learning outcomes in Literacy, Numeracy and to improve student engagement and agency in learning.

Our classrooms are designed with flexible open learning spaces that offer the opportunity to embrace innovative practices throughout the school. The school also provides a multi-purpose hall, and a state of art Library, Visual Arts room, Performing Arts room and a Computer hub as well as a huge range of technology within classrooms.

Our parents support the school through involvement in classroom programs, fundraising, sports activities, camps and excursions, and numerous other activities. Our School Council

met both on-site and remotely and continued to be highly active in effective Governance. The School Council and staff continued to emphasize school spirit and a sense of pride in effort and achievement.

Our outdoor learning areas such as a biodiversity garden, a Japanese garden and vegetable garden continue to provide wonderful learning opportunities for our students and are linked to student learning as well as ensuring the aesthetic appearance of the grounds.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Overport Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Our Statement of Values is available online at on the school website.

3. Engagement strategies

Overport Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

<u>Universal</u>

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Overport Primary School use an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Overport Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling

- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Year Group Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Respectful Relationships
    - Bully Stoppers
    - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

Targeted

- *each year group has a Year Group Leader/Coordinator, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year*
- *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*

Individual

Overport Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan

- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
    - school-based wellbeing supports
    - Student Support Services
    - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
    - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
    - with a disability
    - in Out of Home Care
    - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Overport Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Overport Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education

- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Overport Primary School's Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Overport Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy
- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy
- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Overport Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

7. Engaging with families

Overport Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Overport Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Overport Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

Available publicly on our school's website [or insert other online parent/carer/student communication platform

- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- Suspension process
- Expulsions - Decision

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Attendance
- Student Engagement
- Child Safe Standards
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Students with Disability
- LGBTIQ Student Support
- Behaviour - Students
- Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Restraint and Seclusion

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy*, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards*, etc].

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2025
Consultation	Principal and School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2027