

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the office.

## 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.

Woolsthorpe 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, where student participation is encouraged and valued, 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
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## POLICY

## 1. School profile

Our school is small in size but thinks big in how we innovate and design learning and teaching programs for students. We have a dedicated team of teachers and support staff, who take on many leadership roles and responsibilities within the school. Staff support and care for each other and go above and beyond to ensure our students have the best possible learning opportunities. We continue to strategically address student learning in all areas of the curriculum with a core focus on Literacy and Numeracy. Our school-based Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are the vehicle for purposeful and focused collaboration. Staff actively engage in local professional development opportunities and lead professional learning across our network. Our professional learning was again strategically aligned to our Annual Implementation Plan goals.

In 2024 we had 93 students enrolled, with 7 teaching staff, 2 education support staff and principal. Our school is classed as rural, with the majority of our students bussed to and from school each day, a SFOE of 0.35. We are recognised by our community for providing a safe, caring and innovative learning environment

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Woolsthorpe Primary School is a learning community driven by a culture of learning and continuous improvement. We focus on innovation and structures for learning from each other. As staff we have a relentless focus on improvement in Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for all students and we see this as our core work. We also know our students' health and wellbeing is vital to their development and learning outcomes.

Our Trademark values of Respect, Excellence, Care and Teamwork are embedded into the culture of our school and are visible in the daily actions and behaviour of students, staff and parents. We believe an education worth having is built on authentic learning experiences and relationships.

Students at Woolsthorpe have a range of ways of connecting and collaborating with each other through the rich learning programs we provide. Our Kitchen Garden Program, House System, Creative Arts, AUSLAN, Physical Education, Sporting Teams, STEAM Projects, Leadership Programs and opportunities to be part of our community connections are just some of the ways we foster and build a true Learning Community.

## 3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

*Woolsthorpe Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. 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:*

### Universal

- 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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 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 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 and School Philosophy 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 Leadership Team and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
  - create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, house sports programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Principal or Student Wellbeing Coordinator 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
  - 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, peer support programs, ground force (hands on learning)
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment

#### Targeted

- each classroom teacher will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Action Plan Aboriginal Learning Wellbeing and Safety for further information

- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through our Respectful Relationships and wellbeing programs.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through our Respectful Relationships and wellbeing programs.
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#) through our Respectful Relationships and wellbeing programs including our Big Life program.
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- 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
- students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

#### Individual

- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst/Orange Door, Headspace, Lookout
- 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 and develop 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, adding calm spaces and nurturing areas
- referring the student to:
  - o school-based wellbeing supports
  - o Student Support Services
- Appropriate external supports such as family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst/Orange Door
- 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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers

- running 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

Links to information on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library & Programs:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

#### 4. Identifying students in need of support

Woolsthorpe Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. All staff play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. We 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

## 6. Student behavioural expectations and management

*Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student Code of Conduct. Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. 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, our School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. 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
- restorative practices
- reflection time • behaviour reviews
- 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 Woolsthorpe Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

## 7. Engaging with families

Woolsthorpe 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
- 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

Woolsthorpe 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

Woolsthorpe 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
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [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

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

|                            |                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy last reviewed       | August 2024                                                                                                                                                   |
| Consultation               | School Council 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2024<br>School Community via the school website 1/07/2024<br>School Community through the school newsletter 27/07/2024 |
| Approved by                | Principal                                                                                                                                                     |
| Next scheduled review date | August 2026                                                                                                                                                   |



