

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY YARRA PRIMARY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Administration 03 94283286.

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.

Yarra 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

At Yarra Primary School we collaborate to sustain a positive learning experience for all children within a safe and healthy school environment. We provide a vibrant and purposeful curriculum and foster an engaged and supportive community. Our school works deliberately to 'live' our values: Respect, Caring and Commitment. Our children thrive with excellent staff, supportive parents and friends who combine to celebrate and acknowledge their achievements both in and out of school. We are particularly proud of our integrated environmental program where we recycle, save water, grow, harvest and eat our own garden produce. Learning is active and fun. School learning priorities focus on strengthening academic and social and emotional learning through student voice and agency and experiential learning within the community. We have set high expectations in the learning of Literacy and Numeracy skills. Our Arts programs provide the opportunity to express and appreciate music, visual arts, dance and drama. Yarra is developing a whole school wellbeing program, to sustain a positive school climate, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive environment for all school community members. Positive psychology informed theory, research and interventions (also known as 'Positive Education') is integrated across the school in policies, curriculum and organisational structures. Originally known as Richmond North Primary School, our school is in the inner city and serves a changing and diverse community.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

VALUES

Yarra Primary School's values are:

Commitment	'Persist and try your best'. Commitment is striving to attain your personal goals, persisting and giving your best effort.
Respect	'Respect each other and our environment'. Respect involves taking responsibility for each other. Respect is speaking to and interacting with others in a courteous manner. It is about being honest, reliable and trustworthy.
Caring	'Treat others with care and compassion'. Caring means trying to understand other people's views or feelings and being supportive and caring towards them. Caring is working together in a team, contributing and sharing in a helpful way. It is looking after our peers and taking care of our school.

VISION

Yarra Primary School has in place a set of core values that underpin the vision of the school. The values are unique to our school in that they have been developed by parents, staff and students, however, they are all linked through their direct relationship to the nine core values of Australian schools as outlined in the National Framework for Values Education.

At Yarra Primary School we believe that values education is an integral part of our school and as such needs to be clearly reflected in school policies, codes of conduct and school documentation. These core values are the cornerstone on which we build our vision and underpin all that we do.

Our [Statement of Values](#) is available online.

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3. Engagement strategies

Yarra Primary School implements a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our learning community. We acknowledge that some students may need additional social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students may change over time as they develop 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
- 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
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Yarra 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 Yarra 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 Voice Team (SVT) and other forums including year group meetings with Level Coordinators, the Assistant Principal and the Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - The Berry Street Education Model
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- programs, incursions and excursions are developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- the Year 6 and Prep transition support 'Buddy Program'

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 Koori students with a Kourie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will 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
- new EAL students entering the school for the first time are assessed and included in the EAL program if required or provided an in-classroom program to support their transition
- all Program for Student with Disabilities (PSD) students have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and are referred to Student Support Services (SSS) for an Educational Needs Assessment (ENQ)

Individual

- Student Support Groups (SSG)
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)
- Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)
- Referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services (SSS) for specific trauma or incidents referral to Child First, Headspace

Yarra 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

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- Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First
- Re-engagement programs

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

Yarra 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Yarra 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.

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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

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 Yarra Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Yarra Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. 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 implements 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>

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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 Yarra 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.

7. Engaging with families

Yarra 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

Yarra 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

Yarra 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.

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COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- 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

[Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)

[Bullying Prevention](#)

[Child Safe Policy](#)