STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

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

Eastwood 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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1. School profile

Our vision at Eastwood Primary School is to provide a challenging, enriching, safe and supportive environment that develops responsible and resilient individuals. Our values, Honesty, Resilience, Respect and Kindness are taught explicitly encompassing the Respectful Relationships Curriculum and Positive Education philosophy. These values are at the core of a positive culture at our school.

At the time of the 2021 census, the school enrolment was 595 students. We have an increasing number of students enrolled as English as an Additional Language (EAL) and in our Deaf Facility. Students are predominately drawn from the immediate neighbourhood although some students travel from further afield due to our successful reputation for meeting their special needs.

Our school exhibits a willingness to continuously reflect upon, and if necessary, challenge existing practice. All areas of the curriculum are implemented using a contemporary, evidence based approach based on high impact teaching strategies. The school has developed structures to support student learning that recognise the developmental needs of young children as they negotiate the stages of schooling. A success of the strategic plan was the introduction of PLCs across the school. Timetables were amended to provide staff with the space and time to work more closely and collaboratively. Progress has been made in the FISO teaching and learning elements, with staff using the improvement cycle to plan and deliver evidence-based lessons to their students using an eight to ten week cycle of improvement. There is currently a strong focus on Literacy and Numeracy and targeted tier three, small group learning support for selected students. The refurbishment of the Foundation to Year 2 learning space in 2015 transformed the interior area of the building into a bright, modern space, conducive to learning.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our Statement of Values is available on the school website. Eastwood 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 listed below.

Eastwood Primary School's vision is to provide a challenging, enriching, safe and supportive environment that develops responsible and resilient individuals.

Eastwood Primary School's values are:

Honesty, Resilience, Respect and Kindness.

The values support the school community to work collaboratively and respectfully together for the common good and are used to reflect on the way we interact with each other. The values are also taught explicitly during regular wellbeing lessons in each class. These values also provide the whole school community with a common language supporting our Positive Education ethos.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Eastwood 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, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Eastwood Primary School use the e5 instructional model for Numeracy and the Readers and Writers Workshop model for Literacy using the gradual release framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidence based high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- teachers at Eastwood 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 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 Junior School Council, Student Focus Groups and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through house events, activities and buddies
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour and wellbeing support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
  - Positive Education
  - Be You
  - Real Schools
  - eSmart
  - Chaplaincy program
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- 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, bullying or harassment.

<u>Targeted</u>

- 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 Cultural Inclusion Plan 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.
- led by our EAL co-ordinator and Multicultural Education Aide, we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background.
- 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.
- 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
- 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](#)
- each year level has a wellbeing focus in their weekly meetings to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and to discuss students who may need additional support
- opportunity for all Koorie students to connect 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
- 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

<u>Individual</u>

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

Eastwood 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 modifying the classroom set up and/or routines
- 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 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 Education Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for students:
  - living in Out of Home Care
  - who are funded via Disability Inclusion or Program for Students with Disability programs
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring
  - who are 12 months below or 18 months above in any academic subject.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Eastwood Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported academically, 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. Eastwood Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or academic 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
- student, staff or parent referrals.

5. Student rights and responsibilities

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.

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 program
- 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 are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours will be managed in accordance with Eastwood Primary School's Bullying policy and Student Code of Conduct General and Student Code of Conduct - Playground (refer to appendix 1).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Eastwood Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement and Eastwood Primary Student Code of Conduct General and Student Code of Conduct - Playground (refer to appendix 1). 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

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 Eastwood 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

Eastwood 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 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

Eastwood 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

Eastwood 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:

- 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

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	09/06/2022
Consultation	School community offered the opportunity to provide feedback on update policy via the newsletter, Epsilon.
Approved by	Rukshana Verzijl Principal
Next scheduled review date	2024