

Murrumbeena Primary School Policy



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 or Assistant Principal on 9568 1300.

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.

Murrumbeena 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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POLICY

1. Mission Statement

Murrumbeena Primary School provides exemplary teaching, with rich engaging learning experiences. This fosters an environment where students' curiosity flourishes. Students learn in partnership with the school to develop self-belief and ownership of their learning. The school provides opportunities for students to be challenged and become life-long learners in a global society.

2. School profile

Murrumbeena Primary School, founded in 1917, has a strong basis of tradition and excellence within the school community which covers the areas of Murrumbeena, Carnegie, Hughesdale and East Malvern. Most parents are involved in professional occupations, and they have high expectations for their children's achievements. The school's enrollment of approximately 550 students is supported by a neighbourhood boundary. The school's Student Family Occupation (SFO) is 0.1883. The community is actively involved in many aspects of the school's program, with parents being positive, valued and vital partners in their children's education.

The school is authorised as an IBPYP (International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program) school. The PYP provides a rigorous, innovative and comprehensive curriculum through an inquiry learning philosophy, with a focus on international mindedness and responsible citizenship. The curriculum includes six inquiry units per year, which meet the requirements of both the Victorian mandated curriculum and the PYP. The school is organised into teaching teams where teachers plan together to provide for challenging and individualised learning. Classroom programs are supported by specialist teachers in the areas of Library, Physical Education, Art, Performing Arts and Japanese, and focus on catering for individual learning styles and abilities. Information and Communications Technologies play an integral role in all class programs. The school has a professional, stable and dedicated staff of approximately forty, which includes a principal, assistant principal and a well-balanced staff profile of leading teachers and class teachers. There are a number of support staff in administration, technical support, library support, first aid, kitchen and garden, as well as integration aides who work with a small number of children across the school. A canteen operates four days a week, staffed by a part-time school council employee.

Facilities and resources are of a high standard, including a modern Library, Visual and Performing Arts Centre, swimming pool, outdoor learning spaces, oval and play areas (including playgrounds and sandpits) and a learning centre hosting a Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program.

3. School vision, philosophy and values

Vision: Our vision reflects that of the International Baccalaureate® which 'aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.'

Philosophy: At Murrumbeena Primary school, staff and student wellbeing, inclusion and engagement is at the core of our teaching and learning ethos. We believe that health and wellbeing underpins performance and growth, so we ensure our programs meet the diverse needs of our school community. The school partners with students, parents/carers and community health specialists to implement and improve health and wellbeing initiatives. We use social and emotional learning approaches which are aligned with the Victorian Curriculum and our school's policies, to develop students' self awareness, self management, empathy and relationship skills.

Staff consider the needs of all children, and recognise the importance of safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability. Murrumbeena Primary school will act to build an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged, so that all students are empowered, regardless of the circumstances or backgrounds, to reach their full potential.

The school implements a positive wellbeing approach which is embedded through various programs across the school. The classroom teacher plays a major role in the pastoral care of each student. In addition, the school has student wellbeing coordinators in each area of the school offering further support to students, staff and parents. Emphasis is on building the self-esteem and resilience of each individual and developing sound social skills to enable students to interact positively with their peers. A positive classroom climate is developed through a 'Class Essential Agreement' setting the tone for learning in a productive environment. The core attributes of the PYP Learner Profile (thinkers, inquirers, communicators, risk takers, pen-minded, caring, principled, reflective, knowledgeable and balanced) and school values are reinforced in the classrooms, playgrounds and society in general.

Values: The school values align with the guiding principles of International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP).

At Murrumbeena Primary School, we will uphold the following values -

- **Respect:** for others, our environment and ourselves.
 - **Responsibility:** for our learning, our behaviour and our belongings.
 - **Relationships:** displaying care, compassion, and cooperation when working and playing with others.
 - **Resilience:** displaying persistence and courage when embracing challenges and exploring capabilities.
- 4. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Murrumbeena 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 may change over time.

A summary of Murrumbeena Primary School's universal, targeted and individual engagement strategies are listed below:

Universal

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents/carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- create a culture that is inclusive, engaging, empowering and celebrates diversity
- welcome all parents/carers to be responsive as partners in learning
- analyse 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
- use of the Murrumbeena Primary School instructional model to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons

- 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
- incorporate our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy into our curriculum
- share and promote our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy with students, staff and parents so that they can be celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- plan transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- acknowledge positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication with parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- provide students with 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
- welcome all students 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
- engage in school-wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Zones of Regulation
 - Play Program
 - Peer Mediators
 - Lunchtime Clubs
- provide programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issues, specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- provide opportunities for student inclusion including sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities, structured support programs including buddy programs in Year 5 (with Prep students), peer mediators in Year 5 and the play program in Year 4
- 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

- allocate a Year Group Leader/Coordinator, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- support Koorie students 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 Child Safe Standards Policy for further information
- provide support to students through our EAL program support and funding for whom English is not their first language and/or from refugee backgrounds
- provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)

- ensure 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 Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG), and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- support students with a disability 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
- provide social skills development and health promotion training for the wellbeing and health staff in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- support students enrolled under the Department's international student program in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

Individual

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

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances, and health and wellbeing
- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with a student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Education 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

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

- 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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

5. Identifying students in need of support

Murrumbeena 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. Murrumbeena 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

6. 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. Our school's Statement of Values is to uphold the values of Respect, Responsibility, Relationships and Resilience. This highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our school 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, racism, 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/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.

7. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are explained in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct. Murrumbeena Primary School considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures.

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 our Bullying Prevention Policy which can be found [here](#).

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

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour combined 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 practice conversation
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- detentions
- 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 Murrumbeena 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.

8. Engaging with families

Murrumbeena Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we 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.

9. Evaluation

Murrumbeena Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that may be 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 (Student Online Case System)

Murrumbeena 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
- Sent via Compass notifications
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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

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

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| Policy last reviewed | August 2022 |
| Consultation | School Council |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | June 2024 |