



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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.

Gardenvale 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

Gardenvale Primary School is located in Landcox Street Brighton East and was opened in 1922. The school motto of 'Onwards Upwards' continues to reflect our striving for excellence in all areas. Our vision and mission is for Gardenvale Primary School students to be fully engaged, challenged and to be inspired to aim high and realise their full potential. This is done through quality teaching and the delivery of programs that encourage a love of learning whilst being supported by a vibrant school community.

The school operates across two campuses situated 260 metres apart on Landcox Street, the Prep to Year 2 students on the Junior Campus and the Years 3 to 6 students on the Senior Campus. Specialist Programs are provided across both campuses, ensuring that all students spend part of the week on each campus.

The school continues to be the school of choice within the local community based on its high quality teaching and learning programs, student academic achievement, student wellbeing programs and its outstanding specialist programs. Our school maintains a stable enrolment rate, this is a reflection of the high levels of student outcomes and achievement and the tremendous regard for the school held in the local community.

Each of the two campuses contains a mixture of buildings including the original substantial brick building of three stories on the Senior Campus and the original brick building on the Junior Campus.



The school offers a range of well-resourced specialist subjects including Language Other Than English (LOTE) Japanese, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, STEM, Library and Physical Education. An extensive outdoor education program of camps, excursions, bike education and swimming is provided as well as a biannual school musical, written and directed by school staff.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Gardenvale 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 honesty, empathy, respect, resilience, responsibility and be yourself (HERRRby) at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to 'Challenge, Engage, Inspire'.

We aim to empower our 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 on our school website and through COMPASS.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Gardenvale 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 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 level 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
- prioritising 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 at Gardenvale Primary School have developed 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 Gardenvale 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 through Student Of The Week and HERRRby awards and communication to parents
- monitoring student attendance and implementation of attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level



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- 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. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- creating opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through the school musical, athletics, music programs, peer support programs, Buddies and annual 'Celebrating HERRRby' Week activities.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Year Level Co-ordinator, 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
 - whole School HERRRby Values Program of Honesty, Empathy, Respect, Resilience and Responsibility
 - Restorative Practices
 - 4 week Values program at the commencement of each year for all year levels
 - Feeling Safe Program – external provider
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- 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 or harassment.
- the appointment of a student wellbeing manager and team

Targeted

- each year group has a Year Level Coordinator, 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
- 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.
- our English as a second language students are supported through our Literacy Support program, and all culturally and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds by ensuring they are connected with other families and support services.
- 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.
- 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 are 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
- each year, wellbeing and health staff undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff
- staff 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

Gardenvale 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 a 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/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 Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Information is available on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library such as:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

4. Identifying students in need of support

Gardenvale 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. Gardenvale 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 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 are responsible for:

- participating fully in their educational program
- displaying positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respecting 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

Behavioural expectations of students, 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, Gardenvale 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 will be 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 Gardenvale 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

Gardenvale 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 and Compass
- 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

Gardenvale 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

Gardenvale 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 and Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required
- Link is 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

Policy last reviewed	August 2024
Consultation	SRC – 15/10/24 Wellbeing Manager – 14/10/24 Staff 15/10/24 Education Subcommittee – 14/8/24



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	School Council – 22/10/24 Community 4/6/24
Approved by	Principal 20/11/24
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