



## Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



### HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Whorouly Primary School on 03 5727 1363 or [whorouly.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:whorouly.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

### 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.

Whorouly 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

Whorouly Primary School, established in 1874, is located in the Ovens Valley between Wangaratta and Myrtleford in North Eastern Victoria, approximately 250 kilometres from Melbourne. Students are drawn from the town itself and the school bus service transports students from the surrounding district. The school is located in the small rural township of Whorouly and has close ties with the neighbouring Whorouly Pre School and the local community groups. Whorouly Primary School is a member of the Ovens Learning Community of schools and the base school for a MACC (Mobile Art Program) servicing seven schools. In 2024 there are 27 students across all grade levels from Foundation to Grade 6. Our students come from a wide range of families with diverse backgrounds. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community. We provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our vision is to continually develop an engaging learning environment that promotes academic success along with social and emotional wellbeing, where all students are supported to reach their full potential to enable them to function effectively in a global community and to ensure that the values and beliefs of our school reflect those of the broader Whorouly Community.

Our mission is to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for our students to become the best version of themselves social, emotionally and academically.

The following values underpin the beliefs of the Whorouly Primary School Community and provide the basis for our actions:

<b>Learning:</b>	Acquiring academic, social, physical and emotional knowledge and skills.
<b>Relationships:</b>	Developing authentic relationships where mutual respect and support are promoted.
<b>Persistence:</b>	Cultivating a positive work ethic and managing challenging situations as they arise.
<b>Respect:</b>	Building respect for self and others, our community and the environment.
<b>Teamwork:</b>	Working co-operatively with others towards common goals.

Whorouly 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 respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

## 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Whorouly 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.

### ***Universal***

Whorouly Primary School:

- Prioritises positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing.
- Creates a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive.
- Has high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers.
- Is welcoming to all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.
- Wants all our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school every day.
- Monitors student attendance and will implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Is responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Student Attitudes to School and Parent and Staff Opinion data and school level assessment data.

- Requires all teachers at our school to use the Whorouly Primary School Instructional Framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high impact teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- Expects all teachers at our school to 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.
- Engages in planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Has ongoing Buddy programs for Foundation and Senior students and cross-age connections amongst students through multi-age, whole school, timetabled activities.
- Ensures positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents.
- Gives students the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about our school through the Junior Council or speaking directly to their teacher or the Principal.
- Welcomes all students to self-refer to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader, school Chaplain, and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.
- Develops programs, incursions and excursions to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- Provides opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Has measures 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.
- Engages in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - eSmart learning
  - Cyber Safety for Kids
  - You Can Do It

### **Targeted**

- We have a Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader responsible for the Respectful Relationships Program, eSmart learning, Health and PE curriculum and students in Out of Home Care.
- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader 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
- Our chaplain supports teachers to monitor the health and wellbeing of students, and is a point of contact for students who may need additional 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
- All students in Out of Home Care will be 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

- 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 [insert name of any other school documentation you have in place outlining the school strategies to support Koorie students] for further information

### **Individual**

Whorouly Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement.

At Whorouly Primary School we:

- Build constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- Meet with students and their parents/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school.
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- Consider if any environmental changes need to be made, for example, classroom set up.
- Refer students to Student Support Services for psychological and learning assessments, speech and occupational therapy.
- Refer 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
  - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary Whorouly Primary 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.

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

Whorouly Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The teachers meet regularly to review and identify students in need of support and to enhance student wellbeing. We use 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 data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- discussions with the Chaplain

## **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, 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 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.

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.

School values and rules are revised at the start of each school year and displayed in each classroom. The School Rules booklet developed by the students is displayed in every classroom.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Whorouly 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 taken by teachers and other school staff.

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 Principal
- Restorative practices
- Withdrawal from the playground/classroom
- Written explanation of behaviour/incident
- Behaviour reviews/ 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.

The Principal of Whorouly 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

Whorouly 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.

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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.
- Communicating with parents in a formal meeting if required
- 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

Whorouly Primary School will collect data throughout the 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

Whorouly 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
- 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 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	June 2024
Consultation	Parent community - invitation through the school newsletter 13 <sup>th</sup> June School staff meeting – 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 School Council meeting 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2026