

ASPENDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Amelia Busuttill - Assistant Principal.

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.

Aspendale 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

Aspendale Primary School is located on a large, picturesque site in a well-established residential beachside suburb on Port Phillip Bay, 27 km south-east of Melbourne, close to public transport, parklands and recreational facilities. Students are drawn from the local and wider Aspendale community, which the school has served since 1925.

'Learning for Life' describes our vision to ensure that every student is equipped with the transferable knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing and globally connected world.

Our mission is to provide a high quality, supportive and engaging learning program which builds the academic, social and emotional capacity of every student at our primary school. We aim to develop lifelong learners who care for themselves, others and the community around them, and actively contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful world. Our Core Values of Passion, Respect, Integrity, Commitment and Empathy guide how we teach, learn and interact at Aspendale Primary School.

Our students learn in a supportive personalised school environment, with access to a full and outstanding range of programs across all areas of the Victorian Curriculum. At Aspendale Primary School we provide students with learning experiences that are engaging, relevant, challenging and significant, in learning environments that are stimulating and provocative. We provide students with opportunities to build meaning and refine understanding, through explicit teaching sessions and structured inquiry. There is a strong focus on Mathematics, English and Science as well as developing higher-order thinking skills, design and digital technology skills and creativity. In 2018 APS became an accredited IB World School, the IB Primary Years Program (PYP) underpins our approach to teaching and learning. Over the year, each year level inquires into each of the six PYP transdisciplinary themes (except Foundation who cover four). These themes allow local and global issues to be incorporated into the curriculum and effectively allow students to 'step up' beyond the confines of learning within subject areas.

Our staffing profile comprises of an essential mix of experience, passion and gender balance. We have 26 straight classes. Our students also benefit from a full range of specialists programs, including Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Physical Education, STEM and Chinese Mandarin. Teams also take on a number of whole school events such as our biannual Lit Fest, STEM Night, Art Show and Performance Fortnight (school production). A range of extra curricula activities are provided, including school band, choirs, swimming program, camps, excursions, incursions, one-on-one or group music tuition and large variety of extra curricula (Enrichment) lunchtime clubs. The school also benefits from a strong partnership with our sister school Xuri Jing Cheng School.

Aspendale Primary School has an extensive student leadership team which provides opportunities for students to undertake a variety of roles and be active members of our school community. The school also has a Student Representative Council with representatives from each grade in Years 3-6.

Aspendale Primary School recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents/carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. The school has a very active and supportive parent community with parents/carers assisting in classrooms, the canteen, school council, various committees, excursions and camps.

2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision.

Aspendale Primary School aims to provide a positive, safe, supportive, pro-social school culture where all members of the school community feel valued. Our school provides an inclusive culture where high expectations are set for both staff and students which ensure students have the best educational opportunities, supporting them to achieve optimum learning outcomes across all core curriculum areas.

Learning for Life describes our vision to ensure that every student is equipped with the transferable knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing and globally connected world.

Our Mission is to provide a high quality, supportive and engaging learning program which builds the academic, social and emotional capacity of every student at Aspendale Primary School. We provide opportunities for our students to develop understandings of essential concepts, skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to be life-long learners in our ever changing world.

Our Core Values of Passion, Respect, Integrity, Commitment and Empathy guide how we teach, learn and interact at Aspendale Primary School. As an internationally minded school these values form the

framework for teaching positive behaviours within the framework of the PYP. The PYP Concepts, Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes are an integral part of the curriculum and through development of the Learner Profile attributes students become more internationally minded and are equipped with the skills necessary for the 21st century.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Aspendale 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/carers 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/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 Aspendale 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 Aspendale 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/carers 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/carers
- 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 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 program, celebration days and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to Year Group Leaders, Inclusion Leader, 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

-Bully Stoppers

-Restorative Practices

- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- 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.

Targeted

- each year group has a Wellbeing Team member who is 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 Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- 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 Aboriginal Learning Plan for further information
- 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 [insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students]
- 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 being 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
- 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
- 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

Aspendale 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 and/or Safety 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

-Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Aspendale Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Aspendale 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 and suspension data
- engagement with families
- involvement with Allied Health Professionals
- self-referrals or referrals from parents/carers, teachers or peers
- involvement with outside agency (e.g CHILD First, Orange Door, Shine)

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/carers 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/carers 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, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Aspendale Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

Acceptable behaviours

As Aspendale Primary School, staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our Aspendale Primary School commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- treating students and families in our school community with respect in our school environment and outside our school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or student has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) students
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to Assistant Principal/s or Principal
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures: <http://www.aspendale.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/childsafetyrespondingandreporting> and the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#)
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm

Unacceptable behaviours

As Aspendale Primary School, staff, volunteers, contractors and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the [Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy](#) or where required for duty of care purposes
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present
- have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought

Violence, bullying behaviour, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be consistently tolerated. These incidents will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Aspendale Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents/carers 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, Inclusion Leader, Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal.*
- *restorative practices*

- *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 Aspendale 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

Aspendale Primary School values the input of parents/carers 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/carers and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents/carers and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent/carer 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

Aspendale 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
- sick bay data
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Aspendale 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 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, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Evaluation	To be reviewed by the Education Subcommittee
Approval/Consultation	Wellbeing Team - Leaders Community Leaders (students) Education Sub Committee School Council Principal
Date Ratified	February 2023
Next Review Date	February 2025
Related Policies	

Related Documents	
DET Link to Policy	