



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 Leadership Team at Strathaird Primary School on 97053800.

MARCH 2022

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.

Strathaird 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.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

Strathaird Primary School opened in January 2005 with an enrolment of 165 students. It is envisaged it will increase steadily over the years before peaking at 850.

The School has already established itself within the community as evidenced by the number of families who have chosen to travel beyond their local primary school to attend.

The school population exists in an area of rapid population growth consisting principally of young families with the majority of community members from a second or more Australian generation. In Currently 43 percent of students have an English as an additional language and 1 percent are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Most grades are based on a single grade level, although composite/multi-age grades are implemented where appropriate, to support school needs.

The specialist areas of Physical Education, Art, Music, Environmental Sustainability and I.C.T. have operated and support programs are provided through, Reading Recovery, Levelled Literacy Intervention, E.A.L., and an I.C.T. Coordinator.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

A range of key student wellbeing initiatives lay strong foundations for a caring and friendly school environment. Student welfare continues to be an important issue underpinning all school programs. The school community encourages high standards of behaviour based on cooperation, respect, mutual responsibility and self discipline and actively promotes harmonious student relationships.

The values of RESPECT, SELF ESTEEM, HAPPINESS and WISDOM have been identified as important by the school community and are fostered and promoted. Social skills and school connectedness are important foci and restorative practices are implemented into student management procedures.

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.

Our Vision is 'To empower students to strive for personal achievement, embrace challenges and develop skills and values that enable them to become lifelong learners and engaged, responsible citizens in an ever changing global society'.

Our Statement of Values is available online at:

www.strathairdps.vic.edu.au/parent-information/school-policies/

3. Engagement strategies

A range of programs have been introduced to cater for and meet the needs of the children. The school is committed to high expectations for all; building consistent, high-quality evidence based instructional practice across the school; and implementing a pedagogy based on student responsibility, empowerment, engagement and ownership of learning. There is an emphasis on the academic program using rigorous, evidence-based literacy and numeracy programs. The Inquiry Learning program incorporates big understandings about our world, a range of learning experiences that build on each other and a range of important skills. High quality specialist programs in Music, ICT, Visual Arts, Sustainability and Physical Education are provided by personnel with expertise.

Early intervention is a key focus of the school and Reading Recovery and small group literacy programs are provided for students who require additional literacy support.

Other programs provided to meet the needs of students, include transition programs - K Prep and 6 to 7, LOTE- AUSLAN, Swimming, Camps (Grade 5 and 6) and Excursions, The Resilience Project, Life Education Van, Buddy Support, Junior School Council, Values Education, Interschool Sport, Developmental Learning, Perceptual Motor Program, Student Welfare and Discipline Programs,

Individual Learning Plans are implemented for students at risk.

Strathaird Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. 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.

These are some strategies Strathaird Primary School are implementing:

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*
- *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*
- *deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students are able to have agency and voice in their learning which will target their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers at Strathaird Primary School use a Teaching and Learning 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*
- *teachers at Strathaird 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 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 and other forums including House group meetings. 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 our Buddy program, athletics, and lunchtime programs.*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, 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*
- *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
 - *Respectful Relationships*

- Social/Emotional Learning Program
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*
- *buddy programs, peers support programs*

Targeted

- *each year group has an area Team Leader responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and will refer students who may need additional support to the Assistant Principal responsible for Wellbeing.*
- *connect all Koorie students 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*
- *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*

Individual

Strathaird 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 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*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
 - *with a disability*

- *in Out of Home Care*
- *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

The following are strategies that may be considered and applied on a case by case basis:

- [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

Strathaird 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 helping to identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Strathaird 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 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, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.
- 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, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Strathaird Primary School's Child Safe Policy.

Student engagement and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole school and classroom practices outlined below:

Appropriate Behaviour:

Strathaird Primary School acknowledges students who meet shared expectations outlined in this policy through:

- Student of the week Awards
- Specialist Awards
- Raffle tickets for good behaviour in the yard.
- Certificates for various kinds of positive behaviours.
- Newsletter acknowledgement.
- Badges.
- House Points.
- Most Valuable Player
- Sportsmanship Awards.
- Stickers.
- Academic Excellence and Behaviour Awards.
- Most Improved Award.
- Citizenship Awards.

Our school has high expectations of behaviour and we pride ourselves on promoting the values of RESPECT, SELF ESTEEM, HAPPINESS and WISDOM which have been identified as important by the school community. Social skills and school connectedness are important foci and restorative practices are a key element into student management procedures.

Strathaird Primary School promotes and encourages active involvement of parents in the learning and behaviour of each student. At the commencement of each year all parents are informed of behaviour management procedures via a document outlining the school's approach to student management in both the classroom and the yard.

Strathaird Primary school believes that there should be positive and open communication channels at all times between the school and home. We seek to foster this cooperative approach with parents through initial Parent/teacher interviews at the beginning of the school year, reports, half yearly Parent/Teacher interviews, phone calls and meetings. An Assistant Principal currently is responsible for student welfare issues that require intervention beyond the classroom.

In encouraging and building positive relationships between the school and home, it is acknowledged that there will at times be behaviours and events that occur that may compromise this ideal. As a result our school will continue to use a restorative approach to repair damaged relationships with

individuals and groups. Where appropriate the school will inform and involve parents/guardians in these processes through a Student Support Group.

The following restorative approach will be used in situations of the above:

To the person(s) who caused the harm:	To the person(s) harmed:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're here to talk about..... • Can you tell me what happened? • What were you thinking? What was in your head/ in your mind? • Was it the right/wrong thing to do? • Who has been affected/ upset/ harmed by your actions? • In what ways? • How has this affected you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you think when it happened? • What have you thought about since? • How has it affected/upset/hurt/harmed you? • What has been the worst thing? • What is needed to make it right/to make you feel better?

A Staged Response

- This approach is an important part of prevention and early intervention for students with learning and behaviour issues.
- More serious incidents will require a more formal restorative session that will involve principal class, and all people affected in the incident.
- There will be situations where a formal conference involving principal class, parents and support persons will be required. These incidences will be managed through the restorative process which will work towards 'making things right' in relation to those who have been affected.
- Where a restorative approach has previously been conducted, and subsequently the behaviour continues the school will organise a Student Support Group to address the behaviour; this may include intervention from SSSO services such as Social Workers, and Psychologists.
- Restorative practices in our school aims to move the focus away from a punitive consequence that is based on the establishment of wrong doing. It seeks to value and support those involved and empower change and growth through acknowledging responsibility and being supported through this process. Our school acknowledges that restorative practices are a fundamental shift in thinking about behaviours and dealing with the impact of these behaviours and valuing relationships.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Strathaird Primary 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.

Our school considers, explores and implement 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:

Inappropriate Behaviour:

When students do not meet these expectations, actions are implemented with consistent and outlined consequences outlined below. These are to be implemented using a restorative approach.

CLASSROOM:

We have developed a Classroom Management Plan, which affords every student guidance in making good decisions about their behaviour. The plan outlines our school rules, positive responses and consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. These plans are sent to families at the beginning of the school year and are signed by parents.

Strathaird Primary School Rules (Rules implemented by all classes in the school).

I am responsible and I encourage others.

I show respect with my words and actions.

I keep within my own personal space.

I use equipment for its correct use.

I follow staff instructions straight away

There is a hierarchy of consequences and a sequence of steps to follow in order that inappropriate behaviour is managed by classroom teachers and support is provided to them in cases where students do not respond as required.

Consequences of Inappropriate Behaviour in class

Strathaird Primary School Discipline Steps

W= Warning

1= 5-10 minutes time out in classroom.

2= 15-30 minutes time out in buddy room.

3= Coordinator's room.

4= Sent to office

Parent notification of repeated classroom misbehaviour:

A letter is sent home to parents informing them of their child's repeated inappropriate behaviour when they have reached the 3rd stage of the discipline procedure.

Yard Behaviour

Our aim is always for students to learn and play in a happy and safe environment. Most of the time students play happily in the yard without incidents. However, on occasions there are breaches of the school rules by a small number of students.

For minor breaches of school rules students will be issued with a green slip and a consequence. For moderate breaches of school rules students will be issued with an orange slip and a consequence.

For serious breaches of behaviour or moderate behaviour that continues to be ongoing, students will be issued with a red slip. When students receive a red slip they will automatically receive an after-school detention. Parents will be notified of the after school detention and arrangements will be made with the parents to collect their child after the detention.

Students will be made aware of the slip system by their Class Teachers, and parents will also be informed but it is also important that parents discuss this with their child.

Ongoing Behaviour Issues

Where students continue to exhibit ongoing behaviour patterns, the following strategies will be implemented;

- **Restorative Practices/ Counselling:** Discussing the behavioural problems through restorative conversations and reaching an agreement for future behaviours.
- **Explicit Teaching:** Of appropriate behaviours through the various school welfare programs. Conflict resolution posters are distributed and referred to during these circumstances.
- **Monitoring:** Students in these situations are continually monitored by the Assistant Principals.
- **Withdrawal:** A student may be withdrawn from an activity, class, camp or excursion due to inappropriate behaviours or if their behaviour deems to be unsafe.
- **Detention:** Detention will be given when a student has received three orange slips (refer to yard behaviour). A red slip is given when a student displays serious behaviour. If a student is displaying serious behaviour in the yard, Admin are called and the child is escorted to the office. In these instances, a student will most likely be issued with a red slip and an after-school detention. Parents are informed when a detention is taking place so alternative arrangements can be made for picking up their child after the detention.

Suspension and Expulsion: For serious disciplinary measures and when considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in the ministerial order.

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and is best reserved for incidents when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension

is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- **Withdrawal of privileges.** Student privileges can be withdrawn as a consequence of breaching classroom or school behavioural standards. The specific privileges that are withdrawn will vary according to the circumstance. However it may include things such as representing the school at inter-school sports or attendance at a school event.
- **Withdrawal from class** if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.
Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.
- **Detention** - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.

Where students are required to undertake detention after school, the time should not exceed thirty minutes. The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

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 Strathaird Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Strathaird 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 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

Strathaird 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

Strathaird 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
- 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

Strathaird Primary School policies: www.strathairdps.vic.edu.au/parent-information/school-policies/

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safe Standards

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	8 th March 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2024