# Student Health 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 all students
(b) The expectations for positive student behaviour
(c) The support available to students and families
(d) Our school's policies and procedures for responding to both positive and negative student behaviour.

Whittlesea Primary School (WPS) 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.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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2. School values, expectations, philosophy and vision
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## 1. School profile

WPS is located in the township of Whittlesea, 40 kilometres north-east of Melbourne's CBD. The school is steadily growing as population growth continues along the north-east development corridor. The school enjoys a strong connection to the local community which embraces a country feel while being in close proximity to suburban development.

WPS was established on the current site in 1878. The school enrolment is approximately 440 with .05% of families being of Non English speaking backgrounds. Our school has a relatively low percentage of families in receipt of CSEF. Consistent with the school's semi-rural community students travel an average of 1.48kms from their home to attend school. This is significantly further than the state average of 800 metres. WPS has above state averages for Indigenous students, students with impairment and those identified as at risk.

## 2. School expectations, philosophy and vision

Involvement in the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) initiative is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school expectations and vision. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to demonstrate our core expectations at every opportunity. Our community expectations of 'Respect Your school', 'Do Your Best' and 'Help Others Succeed' are pivotal to our school's success. Explicit teaching of the school expectations and clear communication of what this looks like in all areas across the school ensures consistency. The use of a school wide reinforcement system encourages students to make positive choices and ensures success. Teaching behavioural expectations and ensuring these are clear for all students to follow is a proactive approach that supports students to make appropriate choices. We provide an array of experiences and opportunities that strive to meet and challenge our students so they can reach their full potential.

WPS has a strong vision statement, which drives our direction. It states:

'At Whittlesea Primary School the student is the centre of everything we do. Our vision is to be an inclusive community where learning is highly valued. We strive to develop and support the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of the whole child. We create a positive climate for learning that encourages all children to become collaborative and innovative members of local and global communities.'

## 3. Engagement strategies

WPS implements 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 additional social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students may change over time as they grow and learn. WPS uses a tiered intervention framework to support students.

**Universal Interventions**

Universal interventions are evident in every area across the school. The school expectations, behaviour matrix, behaviour flowchart, targeted curriculum and the reinforcement systems form the common language and climate of SWPBS. These systems cater for all our students.

The following whole school strategies promote positive behaviour at WPS:

- Setting high and consistent expectations of all staff, students, 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
- 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
- Delivering a broad curriculum including inquiry based learning, career electives, leadership training F-6 and PATHS social emotional learning
- Teachers at WPS 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 WPS adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches in order 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 expectations are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and families so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- Carefully planned transition programs are implemented to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, formally at school assemblies and through communication to parents
- Monitoring student attendance and implementing 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 class meetings and Student Agency Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Wellbeing Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Creating opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through buddies, whole school athletics, mentor and music programs such as State school Spectacular
- All students and families are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Leader, Team 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
- Engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - PATHS curriculum and Respectful Relationships
- Providing opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, special interest groups and mentor support programs

**Targeted Interventions**

Targeted group interventions are aimed at cohorts of students that may have a similar need or interest. Interventions include school based programs, incursions and targeted programs provided by services such as Kildonan and Uniting.

The following targeted group interventions are implemented at WPS:

- Each year group has a Team Leader and a Leading Teacher 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 at risk Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- All students in Out of Home Care are appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and are referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- The Wellbeing Leader and School Leadership Team 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 apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Staff utilise social stories, Boardmaker and other targeted resources for specific cohorts of students
- Membership to organisations such as Down Syndrome Victoria
- Supporting staff to undertake targeted training to support their students
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour
- Outreach services are engaged for targeted interventions such as Chin Up, BOLT and COLT, CAMHS and Autism Connect
- A designated sensory space for group social skills activities and explicit teaching of how to interact and play with others
- Targeted camp, excursion and incursion preparation will be planned and implemented to ensure success of all students

**Intensive, Individual Interventions**

Students with high-risk behaviour require targeted interventions to support them to be successful at school. These students require 1:1 interventions, individualised schedules, reinforcement programs and individualised approaches to their routine. At WPS we refer to this as being a student's "Program".

At WPS we implement 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 students and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Positive Behaviour Support Plan
- Developing Student Safety Plans
- Incorporating targeted 'jobs' and tasks to support transitions to the classroom
- Utilising social stories
- Considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example student positioning at the classroom tables, use of a sensory stool

- ES support
- Student mentor support
- Referring the student to school-based wellbeing supports
  - Wellbeing Leader for check in and referral
  - Student Support Services
  - Access to a psychologist at school through a Mental Health Plan
  - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Yarra Me, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, DHHS, Lookout, Child First and Orange Door.

Where necessary the school will support the engagement of the student's family by:

- Being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances, 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
- Inviting and supporting allied health professional to Student Support Group Meetings
- Monitoring individual student attendance and developing Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- Facilitating regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - Included in the PSD program
  - In Out of Home Care and
  - With other complex needs that require ongoing support

## 4. Identifying students in need of support

WPS 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. WPS 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, incident and suspension data
- Engagement with families
- Self-referrals or referrals from families

## 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.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Participate fully in their educational program
- Adhere to the principles of the SWPBS framework including the School Expectations, Behaviour Matrix and Behaviour Process.

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. Parent rights and responsibilities

Parents have the right to:

- Expect that their child will be educated in a safe, clean and secure environment where courtesy, dignity, care and respect are promoted
- Expect that their children are being taught in an individualised manner by quality teaching professionals who understand current research and education initiatives
- Voice any concerns with an appropriate member of staff with the expectation that concerns will be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner
- Be informed about school community events, activities and partnerships

Parents have the responsibility to:

- Ensure their child's prompt arrival and regular attendance at school
- Notify the school of their child's absence as soon as reasonably possible via COMPASS
- Support the school in order to maintain a safe, secure, respectful and stimulating learning environment
- Display and model positive behaviours and values
- Follow all school policies and procedures as published on the school website
- Ensure that students adhere to the WPS uniform policy
- To treat and communicate with all staff members in a respectful manner
- Communicate any concerns with teachers
- Support their child's learning at home
- Meet with the teachers to discuss their children's progress
- Support and encourage school community involvement and participation between the school and various organisations
- Where possible, assist the school in the community and on site activities i.e. working bees, parent information sessions and School Council

### 7. Staff rights and responsibilities

Staff have the right to:

- Be informed about matters relating to students, within privacy restrictions, that may affect the teaching and learning program for students both in classrooms and specialists
- Expect students to regularly attend school
- Be able to teach in a clean, safe, orderly and respectful learning environment
- Be able to teach without disruption
- Have resources available to create a stimulating learning environment
- Regular, comprehensive professional learning to understand the diverse needs of students
- Be treated with respect and dignity by members of the school community
- Access regular and effective professional learning to build their teaching and learning and pedagogical capacities
- Receive constructive feedback from colleagues and students
- Voice concerns with an appropriate member of staff, student or parent/guardian
- Expect that all students adhere to the "Acceptable Use of Technology" guidelines or policy or school code of conduct

Staff have the responsibility to:

- Always follow school policies and program outlines
- Acknowledge student efforts and results in both curriculum and behaviour
- Offer differentiated curriculum opportunities
- Organise connections for students with appropriate student services
- Follow all school policies and procedures
- Check in with a parent if their child is absent on the third day
- Ensure the leadership team is kept informed of regular/prolonged student absences
- Encourage and celebrate consistent attendance rates
- Ensure that classrooms are clean, orderly and tidy
- Follow the SWPBS Behaviour Flowchart
- Create and maintain safe and stimulating learning environments
- Clearly articulate the purpose of the lesson and the expectations
- Ensure that diversity is managed in a positive and inclusive manner
- Accept and celebrate the diversity of others
- Treat others with respect and dignity
- Display, model and teach the school expectations and positive social behaviours
- Keep abreast of best practice through evidence based research
- Provide constructive feedback to colleagues and students
- Follow the VIT Teacher Code of Conduct, meet Professional Standards, and uphold an active, professional and positive presence
- Maintain confidentiality and protect the dignity of others
- Initiate and maintain regular and constructive communication with students and parents/guardians about learning, engagement and wellbeing
- Model appropriate computer or technology usage
- Discuss the dangers of cyber bullying and implement consequences

## 8. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our SWPBS framework. The expectations are explicitly taught so that all students know exactly what is expected of them. Staff follow the Behaviour Flowchart when re-directing behaviour.



**Behaviour Flowchart**
Whittlesea Primary School

Respect Your School
Do Your Best
Help Others Succeed

1:6 Positivity:Correction Ratio

Some students may have their own Positive Behaviour Support Plan

**MAJOR**
- **Defiance** – excessive disruption and/or refusal to follow directions where learning has stopped for the students and/or others.
- **Theft** – taking personal belongings of others or school materials and equipment.
- **Bullying** - repeated, targeted behaviour where there is an imbalance of power.
- **Vandalism** – intentional and malicious destruction of property.
- **Physical Fighting/Aggression** – serious physical contact where injury may occur.
- **Risking Harm** - Significantly endangering the health and well being of any individual.
- **Out of School Grounds** – leaving school grounds.
- **Repetitive Minor Behaviours**

**MINOR**
- **Noncompliance** – refusal to follow a request, leaving classroom space without permission.
- **Disruption** – Calling out, back chatting, inappropriate language, continuous minor interruptions, lateness.
- **Dishonesty** – an act of not telling the truth or cheating.
- **Accessing materials without permission** – misusing materials, equipment and personal belongings of others.
- **Put Downs/Teasing/Excluding** – Using words/actions that make others feel bad.
- **Disrespecting school property** – Misuse of school, personal or others' property.
- **Invading Personal Space** – rough play, not keeping hands and feet to themselves.
- **Out of Bounds** – being in designated 'Out of Bounds' areas across the school.

**Does the teacher require immediate support?**

**YES**
Contact Leader on call for immediate assistance.
Possible actions:
• Take the class and allow teacher to deal with the situation
• Allow for self regulation
• Restorative conversation
• Complete work in office
• Alternate plan
• Family contact
• More serious consequence required
Debrief with reporting teacher

**Teacher** completes COMPASS entry – General attitude/behaviour observation
**Leader** completes COMPASS entry – Leadership support

**NO**
Contact Leader on call. Leader to manage or delegate depending on response required.
1. Investigate event
2. Debrief with reporting teacher
3. Restorative conversation
4. Logical consequences
5. Family contact

Debrief with reporting teacher

Teacher completes COMPASS entry – General attitude/behaviour observation
Leader completes COMPASS entry – Leadership support

**First Reminder**
Restate expected behaviour using positive language
* Refer to 'Behaviour Matrix'
* Allow time for behaviour change

**Second Reminder**
Present two choice options:
1. Change behaviour
Or
2. Offer alternative solution (Relocation, make up lost time, loss of privilege, etc.)
Consider if behaviour has escalated to 'MAJOR'

**Implement Solution**
If child did not change behaviour, provide direct instruction for alternative solution.
* Provide opportunity for self regulation
* Suggest calm down time 3 mins

**Logical Consequences**
Such as: - Timed owed - Lose part of break to complete work; Walk with managing teacher (briefed leader or team member); Clean up mess; Community service; Apology; Other

**READY FOR LEARNING**
Upon re entry welcome student back to class, fresh start
**Chronicle Behaviour**

When implementing consequences the following points must be taken into consideration.

- A positive/supportive/logical consequence/approach is to be taken
- Students must be closely supervised at all times
- Consequences need to be appropriate to the issue being resolved
- The dignity of each student must be maintained throughout the Behaviour Process
- Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx

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

9. Engaging with families

WPS 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
- Providing parent helpers training at the beginning of each school year
- Providing parent helpers 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.

10. Evaluation

WPS 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
- SOCS

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

SWPBS Program Handbook

The school has access to the following services:

- DEECD – NMR Student Engagement and Welfare support staff
- Child Safe Guidelines
- SSSO leader and associated staff
- DHHS case managers and support workers
- Local Police
- Youth agencies

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last updated in July 2019 and is scheduled for review in July 2022.