



# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Bacchus Marsh 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
4. Identifying students in need of support
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Approximately 800 students attend Bacchus Marsh Primary School and approximately 90 staff including classroom and specialist teachers, principal, three assistant principals, learning specialists, education support staff (classroom and administration) a business manager and a Chaplain (wellbeing support).

Bacchus Marsh Primary School continues to be very proud of its history and status as Victoria's oldest operating Government Primary School. It is the largest primary school in the Moorabool Shire.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to engage their interests and passions while building their academic and social-emotional learning.



## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our motto is Consider Others and our values: Respect, Learning, Teamwork and Kindness, are the fabric that bind our school culture.

We are extremely proud of our quality specialist programs including Visual Art, Music, Physical Education and Sport, Kitchen, Garden, Science, History and Mandarin Chinese. In addition, our inclusive education practices, supported by our Positive Education Curriculum and Restorative Practices are continually developing. Community engagement in learning and strong partnerships between school and home are an important aspect of Bacchus Marsh Primary School. We remain committed to the provision of a rich and fulfilling curriculum that supports our students to appreciate and give back to the community they live in while also developing as global citizens.

Our school vision is to develop self-sustaining, lifelong learners in a recognised centre of educational excellence.

### VALUES

We are committed to the values of:

**RESPECT FOR SELF OTHERS and PROPERTY is:**

- Caring about people and treating them well (OTHERS)
- Valuing ourselves and others (SELF & OTHERS)
- Speaking and acting with courtesy (SELF & OTHER)
- Taking care of people's belongings (OTHERS & PROPERTY)
- Standing up for what you believe in (SELF, OTHERS & PROPERTY)
- Doing the right thing when it's hard (SELF & OTHERS)
- Being willing to clean up your mistakes (SELF, OTHERS & PROPERTY)
- Living by your values (SELF, OTHERS & PROPERTY)
- Being honest and sincere (SELF & OTHERS)
- Following the school rules (SELF, OTHERS & PROPERTY)

**LEARNING is:**

- Gaining knowledge and skills
- Showing inspiration and creativity
- Doing the best job you can possibly do
- Having goals and a clear focus
- Working with a purpose and reflecting on your practice

**TEAMWORK is:**

- Working together
- Keeping a safe and happy environment
- Co-operating and helping others
- Being a team player and sharing the load
- Respecting others

**KINDNESS is:**

- Showing that you care
- Making life better for others by doing good



- Giving help to someone who is sad
- Accepting others who are different
- Thinking about people's needs

### **3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies**

Bacchus Marsh 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 need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn requiring us to be flexible and responsive in the following areas:

#### **Universal Strategies**

- 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Bacchus Marsh Primary School use (the workshop model) as their instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction that is evidence-based.
- we adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- affective language is used in partnership with restorative practices
- 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 student voice and other forums including class and cohort meetings and peer support and mediation Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, assistant principals, principal and wellbeing support whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through, athletics, music programs and peer support and mediation along with cross age student voice conversations and classroom buddy relationships.



- we engage in school wide Positive Education approaches with our staff and students, which includes
  - PEEC – Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum P-6
  - Restorative Practices including restorative circles P-6
  - Opportunities to be mindful and take brain breaks
  - Opportunities to express gratitude and show empathy
- peer mediation commenced in 2021
- 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 Strategies

- 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. Koorie students have Individual Learning Plans and Koorie Engagement Support Officers provide guidance and support
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through liaison and support from our Wellbeing Team. Department interpreter services are also utilised.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through liaison and support from our Wellbeing Team.
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Student Support.
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including having an Individual Learning Plan and support from a mentor. They are also 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

### Individual

- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plans
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Wellbeing Chaplain or Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace



- Navigator if relevant
- Lookout Centre
- Kids Hope and other individual Mentors

Bacchus Marsh Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These 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 youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Orange Door, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst

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 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 and providing learning plans for students:
  - with a disability, in Out of Home Care, of Koorie descent or with complex needs.

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

Bacchus Marsh Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Bacchus Marsh 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.

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 this policy. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Bacchus Marsh Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines will be undertaken. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and restorative/consequential action taken by teachers and other school staff.

- Restorative/consequential measures will be applied in the first instance and include a conversation:

**Prompts for those who have done the wrong thing:**

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?



- What do you think you need to do make sure \_\_\_\_\_ feels happy and safe to come to school?

**Prompts for those who have been harmed:**

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What would you like to see happen for you to feel happy and safe at school?

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 and if necessary:

- a student will be warned that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour will be used to diffuse
- privileges may be withdrawn
- referral to the wellbeing/principal team
- detentions
- behaviour reviews & check ins
- internal or external suspension

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- [Suspensions: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/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 Bacchus Marsh 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**

Bacchus Marsh 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
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with home learning 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

Bacchus Marsh 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
- digital developmental portraits linked to our Nurture Program
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website <https://bacchusmarshps.vic.edu.au/>
- 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 and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)





- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Created date     | February 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Consultation     | School Council February 21 2023<br>Student Voice Leaders February 2023<br>School Community via Newsletter, Compass and website link:<br><a href="http://bacchusmarshps.vic.edu.au">bacchusmarshps.vic.edu.au</a> |
| Approved by      | Melinda Williams, Principal                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Endorsed on      | June 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Next review date | February 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                    |