

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.

Strathfieldsaye 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

Strathfieldsaye is a vibrant school with a long and proud history in our school community. At Strathfieldsaye our passionate and dedicated staff deliver a learning experience that builds on students' previous knowledge and learning. We have a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Rich learning tasks are planned in conjunction with our Learner Profile to expand students' skills, their understanding of themselves as learners and their knowledge and place in the world. The school is committed to preparing students for the future as critical thinkers through inquiry based learning and the active promotion and use of technology across all curriculum areas.

Strathfieldsaye Primary School values diversity. Situated in a rapidly growing area on the outskirts of Bendigo our student population comes from a diverse mix of residential areas including high density housing and rural properties.

The majority of students attending come from English speaking backgrounds with 0.6% speaking a language other than English at home. There are close to 300 family groups within the school and 15% have identified as single parents. The Koorie student population of 1.6% is supported by the F-6 Early Years Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program for students who are identified as being at risk. 1% of the student population are funded under the Program for Students with a Disability. Of the students who are identified as cognitively or behaviourally 'at risk' in the general student population 17.6% have significant adjustments made to the curriculum or social environment to help cater to their needs.

The school offers a stimulating learning environment that aims to nurture our students so that they become resilient, compassionate and adaptable well informed members of their community. Students have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through a range of activities and projects and in taking on the roles of School Captains, House Captains, Junior School Councillors and Foundation buddies.

The school has classes from foundation through to Year 6. Our specialist programs include Physical Education, Arts, Music, Library (Foundation) and LOTE (Chinese) - with all students participating. The school has a range of buildings, from a new Building Education Revolution building with flexible learning spaces to buildings where rooms are adjacent to each other so that teams can work together in a collaborative structure. The school has an open, inviting multipurpose area that is utilised by Out of School Hours Care. The infrastructure at Strathfieldsaye Primary school is inclusive of students with a disability including multiple ramps, clear pathways and classroom spaces and toilets for special needs. The school also has an outdoor education site at Mandurang South that promotes sustainability, outdoor learning and a greater connection to the local environment.

Staff are committed to working in partnership with parents, students and the broader community to provide a supportive and positive learning environment in which students' individual skills and talents are identified, nurtured and extended.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Strathfieldsaye Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our CORE values of caring, optimism, respect and excellence at every opportunity.

We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

Our vision at Strathfieldsaye Primary School is to help individual students reach their potential through the support of strong partnerships, in a stimulating, inclusive learning environment, that is locally connected and globally aware.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <http://www.strathps.vic.edu.au/our-school/child-safe-standards/>

3. Engagement strategies

Strathfieldsaye 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.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal Strategies

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework

The School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework has been implemented across the school with the inclusion of a behaviour chart and expected behaviours matrix.

Green, amber and red cards are used during communication with parents and students in relation to behaviour. There is a strong focus on the recognition of positive behaviour across the school and teachers actively teach pro social behaviours expected within the community.

Group Action Project (GAP)

The GAP program was designed to foster peer relationships, teamwork, build a sense of connection and resilience, promote safety in the yard and help to develop community minded citizens for the future.

GAP groups consist of 22-25 cross age students from Foundation to Year 6 and a mentor teacher that remains with a group (where possible) throughout a student's school life. GAP activities are jointly planned and led by both the teacher and year 5/6 students who act as leaders to their younger peers. Activities are team focussed and link to the wider community throughout the year.

Student Voice and Leadership

Student voice is enhanced through our school leaders. Students have the opportunity to become school captains, house captains, Junior School Councillors, Be You student leaders, Young Aboriginal Leaders, grade 6 Buddies and GAP group leaders. Student voice and agency is gathered in a variety of ways including, 'Come and Have Your Say Day', students surveys using the Learning Place survey, one to one conferencing etc.

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Framework

The *Building Resilience Social and Emotional Learning* materials are used to contribute to the development of students' interpersonal development. This initiative takes place throughout the year as a part of the weekly curriculum.

The Healthy Together Achievement Program

The Achievement Program promotes a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing at Strathfieldsaye Primary School and the development of a safe, healthy and friendly environment for learning, working and living in. It provides eight priority areas that the school can work through simultaneously, at a pace that suits the school's need.

Be You

Be You provides educators with knowledge, resources and strategies for helping children and young people achieve their best possible mental health.

Through the Be You initiative, Strathfieldsaye Primary School are planning and taking action to be a positive community; one that is founded on respectful relationships and a sense of belonging and inclusion, and that promotes:

- social and emotional learning (including evidence-based social and emotional learning programs)
- working authentically with parents, carers and families
- support for students who may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

Harmony Day

Every year Strathfieldsaye Primary School engages in a 'Harmony Day' where students inclusiveness, respect and belonging for all Australians, regardless of cultural or linguistic background, united by a set of core Australian values.

National Day against Bullying

Every year, all students at Strathfieldsaye Primary School participate in the National Day against Bullying. Students participate in a range of activities that promote the confidence to speak up and say 'No' to any form of bullying at our school.

Aboriginal Cultural Understanding

Our local Koorie Engagement Support Officer helps to coordinate cultural awareness activities for all students in the school. These run for half a day in year level groupings of F-2 and 3-6. School staff have completed the Department's Cultural Understanding and Safety Training.

Start Up

The Start Up program takes place at the beginning of every year and aims to promote and foster a smooth transition into the school year. Some of the programs that alternate each year include:

- The Root Cause (Mad Food Science Program) aims to educate students and families about healthy eating and the science behind food.
- Let's Get Moving – a step aerobics program that culminates in a whole school performance.
- Team and relationship building activities
- Introduction/revision of school values and School Wide Positive Behaviour Support strategies
- School community picnic and open classrooms
- Establishing daily routines

The Learner Profile

The Learner Profile represents four ways of learning with eight attributes that are valued by the Strathfieldsaye Primary School community. These attributes support students to reach their potential as learners by developing a social, environmental and global awareness and promote active participation in the community.

Whole school strategies in relation to teaching and learning include:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- 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
- the adoption of a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students as per the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction

- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- the monitoring of student attendance at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- the recognition of positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, through communication with parents and formally in school assemblies.

Whole school strategies in relation to an inclusive culture include:

- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- opportunities to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council, classroom surveys and 'Have Your Say Day'.
- opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through GAP, Be You, Grade 6 buddies, sport and music/performing arts programs such as Wakakirri.
- the implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour framework
- working in collaboration with Safe Schools
- the promotion and incorporation of our CORE values into our curriculum, to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- the delivery of the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program

Targeted Strategies**Targeted intervention and engagement strategies include:**

- an additional needs coordinator who acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- the appointment of a Learning Mentor for all students in Out of Home Care as well as an Individual Learning Plan and referral to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- the development of behaviour and safety plans for students where necessary

Individual Strategies**Individual intervention strategies include:**

- Student Support Groups, see:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to Child First, Headspace, CAMHS

Individual engagement strategies 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 Education 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 Child First

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
 - that have other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Strathfieldsaye Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The School Improvement Wellbeing and Inclusion Teams play a significant role in the development and implementation of strategies to help identify students in need of support, and enhance student wellbeing. The following information and tools will be utilised 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
- advice provided from parents or the department from health specialists

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.

| | Rights | Responsibilities | Rules/Agreements | Consequences |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Definition | A right is something we can expect because it is legal or because it is morally just and fair. For each right there is a corresponding responsibility. For rights to work, everyone needs to be responsible for their own actions and behaviour. | A responsibility is when we make informed choices about our behaviour and take control of our actions | Rules are directions that tell you what you are allowed to do and what you are not allowed to do. | Consequences follow rules. Consequences should complement the rules. They should be fair, certain, logical and related to the action. |
| At Strathfieldsaye PS | At our school we believe that students, staff, parents and visitors have rights based on the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • treatment • learning • equipment • negotiation of conflict • movement • safety | With rights go responsibilities. Rights and responsibilities work together. We own our own behaviour. | Teachers and students developed agreements under our CORE values through the School Wide Positive Behaviour framework. We have agreements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • treatment • learning • equipment • negotiation of conflict • movement • safety | With rules go consequences. Positive reinforcement results when rules are followed. Consequences and Restorative Discussion takes place when rules/agreements are broken |

6. Student behavioural expectations

Strathfieldsaye Primary School utilises strategies from the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support initiative. This is an evidence-based framework for Victorian government schools for preventing and responding to student behaviour. It aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all school community members.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school as set out in our Behaviour Chart (See Appendix A) and Expected Behaviours Matrix (See Appendix B), a staged response that is consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines is initiated. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and consequential action taken by staff via COMPASS, phone call or meeting.

Staged, disciplinary measures may be used in response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies; this helps 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 in accordance with Strathfieldsaye Primary School's Behaviour Chart include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate – this will be issued both verbally as well as through an amber card
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- Think Space/Restorative discussion (withdrawal from the yard) – this will be issued through a red card
- referral to the Assistant Principal or Principal
- a yard plan for break times
- suspension
- expulsion

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.

7. Engaging with families

Strathfieldsaye 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 Respect for 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

Strathfieldsaye 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 the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support strategies, and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- frequency of Green, Amber and Red cards
- incident data
- anecdotal records (General Wellbeing-COMPASS)
- school reports
- parent survey data
- CASES21

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Further information and policies can be found on our website: <http://www.strathps.vic.edu.au/>

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in February 2020 and is scheduled for review in February 2023