

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, 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.

CONTENTS

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

POLICY

1. School profile

Strathfieldsaye Primary School 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 and rich learning tasks that 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 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 and LOTE (Chinese) - with all students participating. The school has a range of buildings, from a 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 empower everyone to learn and grow in an inclusive community.

Our Statement of Values is available online at:

<http://www.strathps.vic.edu.au/our-school/child-safe-standards/>

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Strathfieldsaye Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

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

Universal Strategies

Whole school strategies in relation to an inclusive culture include:

- 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
- 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 year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Inclusive Education Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through Happy Active Healthy Hour, Happy Active Healthy Kids Student Leaders, Grade 6 buddies, sport and music/performing arts programs such as Wakakirri.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Inclusive Education Coordinator, School Chaplain, 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
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

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
- deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students are able to engage in programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Strathfieldsaye Primary School use the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model and the SPS Literacy and Numeracy instructional models as their 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 Strathfieldsaye Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents 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

Our school wide processes that support these strategies include the following:

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.

Our SPS Behaviour Chart, Strath Stars, CORE Reminders, CORE Support and CORE Reset are used during communication with parents and students in relation to behaviour and are uploaded on a student's Compass dashboard. 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. Strath Stars and other incentive initiatives are regularly issued.

CORE Reset and CORE Reminders are used to remind students to think more carefully about their behaviour choices and parents are encouraged to talk to their child about how they could approach the situation differently next time to ensure they make a more appropriate behaviour choice in future. If students receive multiple CORE Reminders or CORE Supports in a day, this is upgraded to a CORE Reset.

CORE Resets are issued when students choose to display unacceptable behaviours. Only one CORE Reset will be issued per day, but several incidents can be recorded in each card. Students issued with a CORE Reset are required to attend a Think Space session, during their break time, for a restorative conversation with a teacher, and if appropriate, with other students involved in the incident.

The Department of Education and Training expects all schools to consider, explore 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. Our schools SWBPS approach ensures these points are taken into consideration when supporting students to make appropriate behaviour choices.

Happy Active Health Hour (HAHH)

The HAHH 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.

HAHH groups consist of cross age students from Foundation to Year 6 and a mentor teacher. HAHH 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, Happy Active Healthy Kids student leaders, Young Aboriginal Leaders and Grade 6 Buddies. Student voice and agency is gathered in a variety of ways including student surveys, one to one conferencing and contributions to curriculum delivery.

Respectful Relationships Program

The [*Respectful Relationships Program*](#) 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 needs.

Harmony Day

Every year Strathfieldsaye Primary School engages in a 'Harmony Day' where students show 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:

- 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

Targeted Strategies

Targeted intervention and engagement strategies include:

- an Inclusive Education Coordinator who acts as a point of contact for students and families who may need additional support
- supporting all Koorie students through the development and implementation of individual education plans and liaising with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer for additional support as required

- 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
- the application of a trauma-informed approach, through the implementation of the Berry Street Education Model, to assist all students including those who have experienced trauma
- the development of behaviour safety plans and escalation response plans for students as necessary

Individual Strategies

Individual intervention strategies include:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as other Department services such as:

- [Disability Inclusion Funding and Support](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

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 family to talk about how best to help the student to engage with school
- developing an Individual Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, e.g., 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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

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 other 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, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents 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 are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

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. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

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 and Expected Behaviours Matrix Strathfieldsaye Primary School 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, via COMPASS, phone call or meeting, about the inappropriate behaviour and consequential action taken by teacher and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied, in accordance with Strathfieldsaye Primary School's Behaviour Chart, include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate – this will be issued verbally initially and if the inappropriate behaviour is repeated, through the issuing of 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
- referral to a leadership team member
- restorative practices
- 'Think Space' and restorative discussion during break times, following the issuing of a red card
- referral to the Assistant Principal or Principal
- yard plans during break times
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion, if determined appropriate by the NWVR Regional Manager

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 Strathfieldsaye 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

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 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

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
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Strathfieldsaye 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 and on Compass
- 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

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2024
Consultation	Students – School Captains Parents – School Improvement Sub Committee 05.02.24 School Council – School Council Meeting 20.02.24 Uploaded to School Website
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2026