



# Student Wellbeing and Engagement

## POLICY

### Rationale

Cardinia 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.

### Aim

- To support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.
- To ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:
  - \* our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students;
  - \* expectations for positive behaviour;
  - \* support available to students and families; and
  - \* our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students and parents/carers at Cardinia Primary School.

### Implementation

#### *School Profile*

Cardinia Primary School is located in the small rural township of Cardinia, approximately 65 kilometres to the south-east of Melbourne. The school has been educating local children since 1911, historically being a small school that served its small rural community. The school has undergone significant change in the last ten years. Urban development in the south-east growth corridor, in particular the rapid expansion of Pakenham, has delivered additional enrolments.

The school ended 2017 with an enrolment of 313 students, 145 female and 168 male. The vast majority of these students live outside the school's designated enrolment boundary (as approved by the Department of Education and Training). The school is currently at its maximum enrolment level with two cohorts at each grade level from Foundation through to Grade 6.

The staffing profile at Cardinia Primary School in 2017 included a Principal and 19.3 equivalent full time teaching staff (16 full-time and 6 part-time staff members). The school is fortunate to have a number of very experienced and capable teachers that blend well with its junior and graduate teachers. In addition 10 Education Support (ES) staff are employed at various time fractions to support our funded students across the school, while there are 2 equivalent full time Education Support staff in the office.

The school's socio-economic profile falls in the low-mid range. Less than 10% of our students are EAL (English as an Additional Language) and 2% of our students are ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander).

Cardinia Primary School is very conscious of maintaining its rural school ethos and valuing its motto of a 'Caring Family School', both of which are highly attractive to families wishing to enrol their children at the school. There are many events firmly cemented in the school's yearly calendar: a Whole School Picnic, Easter activities and Easter Bonnet Parade, participation in the Yakkerboo Parade, Show Day, a Whole School Camp and an annual Christmas Concert. The school also has an extensive Buddy Program, with every student in the school given a 'buddy'. The students work with their buddy throughout the year to prepare for special events and activities.

### ***School Values, Philosophy and Vision***

#### *Vision*

At Cardinia Primary School we will provide a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment that inspires, challenges and supports all students to achieve their personal best.

#### *Philosophy*

At Cardinia Primary School:

- we will provide a safe, nurturing and engaging learning environment;
- we will be inclusive and accept all members of the school community;
- we will implement consistent whole school teaching and learning practices through agreed systems and processes;
- we will provide explicit instruction with clear learning intentions, success criteria and high expectations of all students;
- we will encourage each student to strive for their personal best through differentiated learning;
- we will empower students to take ownership and be actively involved in their learning;
- we will encourage students to be active participants in their school and wider community;
- we will value creativity and innovative thinking;
- we will closely monitor student wellbeing and achievement; and
- we will value our role as educators and through targeted professional development strive for continuous improvement.

#### *Values*

Cardinia Primary School's values are:

- **Resilience**

*We keep trying and never give up.*

*We think positively.*

*We accept challenges.*

*We know that mistakes are part of learning.*

*We bounce back from things that hurt and disappoint us.*

- **Respect**

*We respect the needs and rights of everyone.*

*We accept and embrace difference.*

*We listen to each other and our teachers.*

*We follow the rules.*

*We look after our school and treat school resources with care.*

- **Working Together**

*We can achieve more together than we can on our own.*

*We learn from each other.*

*We work as a team.*

*We make sure no one is left out.*

*We are part of the community.*

- **Personal Best**

*We always put in our very best effort.*

*We have a go, even when things are hard.*

*We accept help and support from others.*

*We try to learn from our mistakes.*

*We focus on our own achievements.*

- **Caring**

*We care about others and consider their feelings.*

*We are fair and kind.*

*We include everyone.*

*We look after ourselves and take care of each other.*

*We are a big family.*

### ***Engagement Strategies***

Cardinia 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**

- 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 and Parent Opinion Survey.
- Teachers use a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students.
- The school has an Additional Needs and Wellbeing Coordinator who monitors the health and wellbeing of students and is available to support classroom teachers and the school community.
- The school has a 'Wellbeing Professional Learning Community' that comprises staff from across the school and who are responsible for the delivery and monitoring of wellbeing initiatives and programs.
- The school's values are promoted to our students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundations of our school community.
- Provision of a supervised Quiet Area during lunchtime as a space for students requiring respite from the playground.
- To ensure the smooth transition of students from one year level to the next, classroom teachers have

a meeting with the new teachers prior to the start of the school year to pass on useful information and strategies.

- We engage in a school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students through our 'Cardi Award' program.
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom and formally at school assemblies.
- We monitor student attendance through GradeXpert and implement attendance improvement strategies where necessary in accordance with the school's Attendance Policy.
- School leaders, through Junior School Council, organise different activities and fundraising events to develop social awareness across the school. School leaders are also regularly invited to attend School Council.
- We create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through a whole-school buddy program.
- We implement school wide programs such as Respectful Relationships and The Resilience Project.
- The school conducts many whole-school events across the year. These activities include a Whole School Picnic at the start of each year, Whole School Sleepover at the end of Term 3 and a Whole School Camp (Foundation to Grade 6) towards the end of the year. The school also participates in events in the wider community like the Yakkerboo Parade in Pakenham.

#### Targeted

- Comprehensive transition program for our Foundation students, with the children visiting the school four times prior to school entry. Teachers also visit feeder kindergartens in Term 4 to acquaint themselves with the incoming students.
- Additional transition sessions, within school and at their chosen secondary school, are undertaken for students in Grade 6 where a need has been identified.
- All students funded through the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD), in the ASD category, have a Student Snapshot and Positive Partnerships Matrix to help staff cater to their individual needs.
- The School Chaplain is available to address particular cohort issues, either individually or as a group.
- All Koorie students have an Individual Education Plan and are connected with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer.
- All students in Out of Home Care are appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment if required. The Additional Needs and Wellbeing Coordinator also liaises with Lookout to ensure the wellbeing of these students.

#### Individual

- Individual Education Plans are prepared for students who are achieving above or below the expected level, with goals designed for personal success.
- Student Support Group meetings are conducted every term for students with PSD funding to discuss the student's Individual Education Plans.
- Applications are made for students who it is believed would benefit from additional assistance through the Program for Students with Disabilities.

- A range of external providers of health services are made available to students and their families. This includes Student Support Service Officers (SSSO) (speech and psychology), Shine Assist, Visiting Teacher and STA (Speech Therapy Assistance).
- We provide families the opportunity to connect with appropriate support through Windermere, Child First, Uniting Connections and SASP (School Attendance Support Program).
- A School Chaplain is employed two days a week to work with students and families requiring extra emotional support.

### ***Identifying Students in Need of Support***

Cardinia Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school's Additional Needs and Wellbeing Coordinator, in consultation with classroom teachers, plays a significant role in identifying students in need of support and enhancing student wellbeing.

Cardinia 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 data/records;
- Academic performance;
- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation;
- Detention and suspension data;
- Engagement with families; and
- Self-referrals or referrals from peers.

### ***Students 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.

At Cardinia Primary School we expect students to:

- Attend school regularly and arrive on time;
- Come to school ready and willing to learn;
- Always try their best at everything they do;
- Support the learning of other students;
- Care for their own and other's property, including the school grounds and equipment;
- Display positive behaviours and comply with the school rules and expectations;
- Treat everyone, including other students, in a polite and friendly manner; and
- Resolve conflict calmly, sensibly and fairly.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are

encouraged to speak to their parents or carers or approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

### ***Student Behavioural Expectations***

Positive and responsible student behaviour is necessary to ensure a safe, happy and productive school environment. Cardinia Primary School wishes to encourage student responsibility, self-discipline, respect for each other's rights and the creation of optimal conditions for effective teaching and learning.

At Cardinia Primary School we will:

- Formulate and implement a Behaviour Management Policy, which is consistent with this policy;
- Respond to inappropriate behaviours through a staged response;
- Have regard to individual student's background and needs in relation to their behaviour and the progress that they have made in relation to their behaviour;
- Modify a student's academic program if necessary to allow them to succeed;
- Maintain an up-to-date record of student behaviour in the playground;
- Keep parents informed, and actively encourage them to assist in the development of their child's behavioural performance;
- Include strategies and goals relating to behaviour management within individual student's Individual Education Plans when they are experiencing difficulty achieving positive behavioural outcomes; and
- Recognise and reward positive student behaviour.

Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with the school's Bullying Prevention Policy.

Where appropriate, parents will be informed about a student's inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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.

### ***Engaging with Families***

Cardinia Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and will strive to support families to engage in the 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 through 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 homework and other curriculum-related activities;
- Involving families in school decision making;
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families; and
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

### ***Evaluation***

Cardinia 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:

- Attitudes to School Survey;
- Student Voice interviews conducted throughout the year;
- Incidents recorded in the Yard Duty folder;
- Parent Opinion Survey; and
- Chaplain and Shine Assist participation date/s.

### **References**

- School Policy Advisory Guide  
Engagement
- Attendance Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Inclusion Policy

### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years or as deemed necessary.

### **Ratified**

This policy is not required to be ratified by School Council.