



# 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.*

*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, 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
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## POLICY

### 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.

Currently the school has an enrolment of 175 students. The vast majority of these students live outside the school's designated zone (as approved by the Department of Education and Training).

The current staffing profile at Cardinia Primary School has 30 staff which includes a Principal, Assistant Principal, Learning Specialists in Numeracy and Literacy and Auslan, Science, Music and Art Specialists.

Cardinia Primary School is 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 Sleepover, 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 buddies 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.

## Classroom Expectations

### **R** RESPECT

- We are ready to actively listen and learn
- We follow classroom expectations
- We understand the needs and rights of others and their space
- We contribute to a positive learning environment

### **I** INTEGRITY

- We are honest and use kind words in all we say and do
- We take responsibility for our choices and learn from our mistakes
- We treat others the way we would like to be treated
- We do what is right, even when no one is watching

### **S** SELF-REGULATION

- We use safe, calm choices when feeling frustrated or upset
- We know that mistakes and challenges are part of learning and we keep trying
- We plan, we check in, we reflect and we grow
- We prepare what is needed and are ready to learn

### **E** EXCELLENCE

- We are a T.E.A.M (Together Everyone Achieves More)
- We always put in our best effort and challenge ourselves in every subject area
- We take pride in our work
- We focus on our own achievements while celebrating others



## Playground Expectations

### **R** RESPECT

- We follow the playground expectations to keep everyone safe
- We are kind to everyone and treat them fairly
- We look after our school and treat school resources and equipment with care
- We display good manners and fairness

### **I** INTEGRITY

- We take responsibility for our choices
- We play fair and show kindness to everyone
- We are upstanders. Don't be a bystander - seek help from a teacher when needed.
- We include everyone

### **S** SELF-REGULATION

- We play safely taking care of ourselves and others
- We move away when something is frustrating or upsetting us and seek an adult if needed
- We use strategies to calm down and try again when we are feeling overwhelmed
- We think before we act

### **E** EXCELLENCE

- We accept wins and losses gracefully
- We find ways to help, encourage others and model good behaviour
- We show our best selves through fair play, teamwork and kindness
- We use positive words and actions

## Wellbeing and engagement strategies

*Cardinia 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

- 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 a Wellbeing Officer who monitors the health and wellbeing of students and is available to support classroom teachers and the school community.
- 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 Xuno 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.

### 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 of children identified as needing extra support 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) or Disability Inclusion (DI) program have a Student Snapshot to help staff cater to their individual needs.

The School Chaplain is available to address particular cohort issues, either individually or as a group.

### Individual

- Individual Education Plans are prepared for students who are funded through the PSD or DI programs and those who are achieving above or below the expected level, with goals designed for personal success.
- 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 Designated Teacher also liaises with Lookout to ensure the wellbeing of these students.
- Student Support Group meetings are conducted every term for students with PSD or DI funding, ATSI or OOHHC to discuss the student's Individual Education Plans.
- Applications are made for students who it is believed would benefit from additional assistance through the Disability Inclusion Program.
- 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 one day each 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 Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance 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 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

## **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:

- 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
- Resolve conflict calmly, sensibly and fairly
- 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.

## **Student behavioural expectations and management**

*Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct. Prevention and being proactive is our preferred approach to developing a positive school environment.*

*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.*

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Cardinia 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 about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers 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. Consideration will be given to an individual student's needs in relation to their behaviour, with appropriate modifications and/or consequences implemented for these students.*

*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 include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to Leadership
- restorative practices
- time out of the yard during recess and lunchtime
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

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 Cardinia 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.

## **Engaging with families**

*Cardinia 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.

## **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:

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

Cardinia 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
- Provided to staff at induction and included on Google staff drive
- Discussed at staff meetings as required
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## 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 Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2026
Consultation	6th May at School Council
Approved by	Principal Susan Wepster
Next scheduled review date	May 2028

