

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.

Derrimut 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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POLICY

1. School profile

Derrimut Primary School (DPS) opened its doors in 2010, and is one of 11 schools in the Public, Private Partnerships (PPP) program. The school is situated in the inner Western Suburbs of Melbourne. The backgrounds of students reflect a cultural and socio-economic diversity, including a number of children from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The Derrimut Primary School community is committed to providing excellence in teaching and learning, which stimulates and challenges each student to develop lifelong learning skills and strategies. We provide a safe, nurturing environment where teachers, students, families and the community work in an effective partnership.

Our school is structured in single year levels, Foundation-Year 6 with a specialist curriculum of PE, Art, Performing Arts and LOTE- Chinese Mandarin.

Derrimut Primary School has a main building and portables that provide spacious and well-equipped learning spaces. Our school has a full-sized gym, design and art space, performing arts studio and a range of multi-purpose rooms. Our grounds are neat and well presented. These focus on quiet play areas in our Sensory Garden, creative play in our Agora, with our Playpod, outdoor classroom spaces, and playgrounds. Our oval, gaga pit and basketball courts provide active play areas.

We are committed to improving the literacy and numeracy skills of every child through a consistent Instructional Model and Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum. Our teachers implement High Impact Teaching Strategies through every lesson to ensure our children have explicit teaching, effective feedback and have goals to work on at school and at home.

The interdisciplinary curriculum is lead through an inquiry or action research model. Inquiry based units explore deep knowledge of Humanities, Science, Technology and Health. This situates learning within a political, social and cultural context, globally and locally. The curriculum develops pathways to personalisation through formative assessment and goal setting, rich multi-literacies programs supported by a highly effective 21st century multimodal approach. This includes a 1:1 iPad in years 3-6, Prep – 2 class iPads, and mentoring, coaching and student leadership programs across the school.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Derrimut Primary School's 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 Excellence, Respect and Responsibility at every opportunity.

Derrimut Primary School has extremely talented and professional staff, who work closely together to ensure the educational and wellbeing needs of all students are met. The development of a core set of values of **Respect, Excellence and Responsibility**, and a whole school approach to cognitive and emotional engagement has led to a consistent and supportive environment in which students flourish.

Derrimut Primary School is 'a place to grow and thrive'. Our school's vision is that we are an inclusive and collaborative community of thinkers and learners. We strive for excellence, so all learners can be the very best that they can be.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Derrimut 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.

Derrimut Primary School has embedded the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework (SWPBS). SWPBS is a broad range of systemic and individualised strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes in schools acknowledging positive behaviour. The key attributes of SWPBS include preventive activities, data-based decision making, and a problem-solving orientation.

This whole school approach ensures we create an environment, which encourages effective learning through the development of a positive and safe learning environment. We encourage positive feedback to students that endeavour to teach, and redirect expected behaviours. We recognize that learning social skills and socially acceptable behaviours is a process, which everybody moves through at a different pace. Learning appropriate social skills is seen in the same light as the teaching of reading, writing and numeracy. Some students need more assistance in some areas and less in others.

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

Tier 1: Universal Supports

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and families as stated in our schools positive behaviour expectation matrix*
- *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 families 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 Derrimut Primary School the gradual release of responsibilities 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 Derrimut 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*
- *positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom and yard, and formally in school showcases and communication to parents*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
 - *Zones of regulation*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*
- *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.*

Tier 2:targeted intervention

- *each year level has a member from the leadership team responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *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*
- *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*
- *we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background*
- *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 being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being 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*
- *students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)*

Tier 3:individual intervention

Derrimut Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- *building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
- *meeting with student and their families 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 council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst*
 - *All strategies in Universal and Tier 2 intervention*

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 Education 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

Derrimut Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Leadership team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Derrimut 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 and processes*
- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
- *wellbeing referral data*

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 families 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

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 Derrimut Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Derrimut Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, families will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school has a consistent way of responding to minor and major behaviours and this will be used 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. Responding to student behaviour will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Responding to minor and major behaviours include:

- *The use of the 4R's*
 - *Remind (both non-verbal and verbal)*
 - *Redirect*
 - *Relocate*
 - *Reflect*
- *Positive Behaviour Strategies (such as Behaviour plans, communication books, play plan, individual acknowledgement systems, pre-corrects etc)*
- *Restorative practices and conversations*
- *loss of privileges*
- *referral to leadership*
- *behaviour support and intervention meetings*
- *Student support meetings*
- *suspension-in-house or external*
- *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>

The Principal of Derrimut 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

Derrimut Primary School values the input of families, 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
- Providing a range of communication avenues, such as the school website, compass, newsletters and social media platforms
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between families and staff
- providing family 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

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

Derrimut Primary school will also regularly monitor our school referral data 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
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory family 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 Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

Communication

This policy is presented at and ratified by School Council, as per Department of Education Policy requirements.

It is published to our Derrimut Primary School Website. It is available to staff via our School Documentation and presented to our staff annually.

Policy review and Approval

Policy Last Reviewed	August 2023
Consultation School Council	August 2023
Approved by Principal	August 2023
Next scheduled review date	August 2025