

# STUDENT WELL-BEING 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.

Yarrunga 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 Well-Being and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to maintain our 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

### School Profile

Yarrunga Primary School is an integral and unique part of the wider Yarrunga and Wangaratta community and our school plays a vital role in the lives of our students and their families. Our school encourages students to embrace learning, strive to do their best and to build their emotional, social and physical Well-Being.

Yarrunga Primary School's programs are aimed at encouraging students to become lifelong learners. They are supported in the development of their goals for learning. We have a focus on supporting students to gain the dispositions of being Resilient, Resourceful, Reflective and Reciprocal.

Staff work collaboratively in planning and designing curriculum to meet the needs of all of our students. This includes on-going professional development and weekly Professional Learning Team meetings. The school has designated instructional leaders who plan and coordinate these areas. Staff at Yarrunga PS are supported and valued.

Yarrunga PS continues to refine programs and strategies to maintain a consistent approach across the school to student Well-Being and behaviour.

### **Our school values are-**

**Be Respectful** - where words and actions show respect for self, others and property.

**Be Responsible** - where all members of the school community show accountability for words and actions.

**Be a Learner** - by reaching individual potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Our staff provide wrap-around care and support for all students. Students at risk are supported with individual behaviour management plans which are regularly reviewed. Student well-being is further supported by a dedicated Student Pastoral Care Teacher, a full-time Social Worker, and a Chaplain who works two days a week.

The school is supported through the Equity Funding to provide additional supports and opportunities to our students as a means of addressing the disadvantage within our school community.

We operate extensive intervention programs and cater for students with additional needs including remedial classes, teacher aide support and modified classroom programs. Our school provides speech therapy, occupational therapy and access to other learning supports and therapeutical interventions as required.

## **School values, philosophy and vision**

Yarrunga Primary School is underpinned by our three school values of Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be a Learner. Our staff is committed to providing a therapeutic approach to behaviour education and equipping our students with the strategies to be socially successful.

Our school's vision is to provide a safe learning environment for our students to achieve their personal best, to develop strong learning dispositions and prepare them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

## **Engagement strategies**

Yarrunga 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:

- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student Well-Being
- Maintain our 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, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum including our Rich Units that cater to student voice and excellent specialist programs
- Teachers at Yarrunga Primary School use a common language across curriculum areas and for behaviour education
- Teachers at Yarrunga 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
- 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 formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- Monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies
- Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Kids Council, Respectful Relationships Student Voice Team and various other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, or members of our Well-Being Team whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, lunch time clubs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to their teacher or a member of the Well-Being Team if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud that our students across the board feel that they have someone on staff that they can talk to if they need
- We engage in school wide behaviour education with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Play is the Way
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Buddy programs

Targeted:

- We have a Well-Being Team that includes our Principal, Pastoral Care Leader, Social Worker and Chaplain to support the needs of our students
- Our Koorie students are a part of our fortnightly Bindi Group
- All students in Out of Home Care have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment

- Well-Being and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student Well-Being data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- We have a member of staff trained in the evidence based Secret Agent Society to support students with autism or students who have social/behavioural difficulties

Individual :

- Student Support Groups, see:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan which include Student Strengths and Student Voice and Opinion/s
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Referral to Well-Being Team, Regional Attendance Officer and Student Support Services
- Referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Navigator
- Lookout

Yarrunga 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 parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Education Plan
- Considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- Referring the student to:
  - School-based Well-Being 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
  - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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 Well-Being
- 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 (OoHC)
- and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

## **Identifying students in need of support**

Yarrunga Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Well-Being Team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies that help identify students in need of support and enhance student Well-Being. Yarrunga 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, yard duty 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, 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 or Well-Being Team.

## **Student behavioural expectations**

We have set high behavioural expectations of students, staff and families, but recognise that behaviours are not learnt in a vacuum and people have varying skill levels regarding self-regulation and social interaction. With this at the forefront of our mind and in line with our therapeutic approach, vary our expectations and our approaches to meet our students point of need, and work with them to develop their capacity to behave appropriately. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to in accordance with Yarrunga Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Yarrunga Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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
- Redirection to a different activity, peer group or area
- Teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Referral to School Leadership or Well-Being Team
- Restorative practices
- Behaviour reviews and documented Behaviour Plans
- Detention
- 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.

## **Engaging with families**

Yarrunga 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:

- 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 in school decision making through the School Council
- Co-ordinating resources and services from the community for families
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students that include Student Voice.

## **Evaluation**

Yarrunga Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of Well-Being 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
- Yard behaviour data
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case Management Minutes
- CASES21
- SOCS

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated on 19/3/2020 and is scheduled for review in March, 2021.