



Student Engagement and Wellbeing 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.

Wonga Park 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.

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

Wonga Park Primary School was founded in 1895 and has always been a central hub of the Wonga Park community. With the local area being part of the Green Wedge, the land use and larger properties have remained unchanged, giving the area a semi-rural feel. The school has a strong sense of community and has longstanding links with the local Burch Memorial Pre-school, the local sporting clubs (WP Cricket Club, Wonga Wizards Soccer Club, WP Netball Club and the WP Tennis Club), the Wonga Park Scouts, Clifford Park Scout Park, the WP CFA and the WP Community Cottage. With the demise many years ago of our local Wonga Park Village Shopping Centre, our monthly Farmers' Market has been an important initiative to provide a regular place for the Wonga Park community to connect. Wonga Park PS is a BARR school (Bushfire At-Risk Register) and is also the Neighbourhood Safer Place for the wider community, providing a place of last resort in an emergency.

Our learning community currently consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal, 2.0 Learning Specialists, 23 Teachers, 8.8 ES staff, school chaplain, school counsellor, our 478 students (241 females and 237 males) and 309 families. Enrolments have increased steadily over the past six years with the the school increasing from the 315 in 2015 to the current enrolment of 478. The school has an enrolment cap of 450, however we are managing the enrolments that exceed this limit with our Enrolment Management Plan. With much of our enrolment zone being large properties, State Forest or north of the Yarra River, the number of students within our zone is low. This has lead to an increasing percentage of students coming from outside our zone, including Chirnside Park, Croydon North, Croydon Hills and Warrandyte. With increasing enrolments the school has recruited staff very intentionally to support the school's priorities and complement the strong team culture that exists. Succession planning and building leadership capacity throughout the school has been key focus also.

The school is designed to create four smaller communities (Prep, 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6) within our bigger community. There are three straight grades at each level (except for Grade 6 where there are two classes), with the grades at each level located as close as practicable. Break out areas provide flexible learning spaces where students can work independently and collaboratively. We have a stand alone art room, music room and a multi-purpose room that accommodates Maker Space and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen. There is no indoor gym, however a covered basketball court is well utilised. The playgrounds, sandpit, oval, outdoor learning spaces, Stephanie Alexander gardens & chicken coop and recently upgraded prep imagination garden provide many attractive spaces for students to play and learn and students also have access to the adjacent council owned Dudley Reserve as an extra play space. There has been a strong tradition to utilise amenities in our local area as alternative learning spaces with Clifford Park Scout Park being used for our Grade 5/6 'Out There' program and the local Wonga Park ovals and courts being used for the Interschool Sport program and our Whole School Cross Country.

The wellbeing of our students, staff and families is a high priority where the building of strong relationships and partnerships is a focus. Wonga Park is a Tribes Learning Community, where we are all committed to creating a safe and caring environment where positive relationships can be nurtured and students can thrive. The TRIBES Agreements underpin the way we live and learn together. Teachers support students to develop the collaborative skills to help them work together, set goals and solve problems, monitor and assess their progress and celebrate their achievements. Our Whole School Tribes are highly valued by our students, with our Grade 6s leading the fortnightly sessions designed to forge friendships and strengthen their understanding of the TRIBES Agreements. Authentic student leadership positions are promoted, offering young people the opportunity to develop new skills, be in service to their peers and make a difference. As a learning community there are strong links between home and school, which were strengthened even more during remote and flexible learning. Families are very supportive and involved as partners in their child's learning. There are many human resources, structures and programs embedded to support the wellbeing of everyone in our learning community including a school based student counsellor and school chaplain. Initiatives such as the Fathers Of The Oak, a group for our dads and children, have emerged in response to identified needs.

Our highly dedicated staff demonstrates a strong commitment to our values-based culture, continuous improvement and achieving excellence in teaching and learning. Committed teams of teachers at each level design engaging, flexible and authentic learning opportunities that are ICT rich, to explicitly teach the language, tools and strategies for students to engage in analytical, critical and creative thinking tasks and Challenge Based Learning projects. This inquiry approach provides the framework where the whole school investigates the one Big Idea each term culminating in students finding a creative solution to a real world open-ended challenge. As a learning community, we have invested in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and partnered closely with EdPartnerships to build professional knowledge and a shared understanding in the focus areas of literacy, numeracy and learner agency. The building of leadership capacity and succession planning has been a priority, with mentoring, coaching and professional learning opportunities being a feature.

As an Apple Distinguished School, Wonga Park PS is acknowledged for leadership and innovation in the use of technology. We have a well established 1:1 BYOD iPad program with over 95% of students from Prep to Grade 6 with their own device. The school has 50 leased iPads for students and all teachers

have a school iPad. Our strength in the area of ICT was of enormous benefit in the shift to online learning during Remote and Flexible Learning

Students participate in four one-hour Specialist Programs each week - Art, Physical Education, Music, Maker Space (Grades 2-6), Sensory Gym (Prep and Grade 1). AUSLAN was introduced in 2020 and has been very positively received by staff, students and families. The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden is a highlight of the Grade 3/4 program, with students having a two hour cooking experience and one hour in the garden every fortnight. Two ES staff facilitate the SAKG program, working with the classroom teachers and parent and community volunteers to support the program. Many extra curricula opportunities are offered including Expressions Programs, Instrumental Music Program, Walk To School Club, Jogger's Club, Hot Shots Tennis, After School Basketball, Lunchtime Clubs.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

At Wonga Park Primary School we believe that our students have the right to feel respected, happy, safe, secure and successful. We believe that a positive approach to behaviour is the best means of fostering a climate wherein these values can be exercised and developed. The school values and Tribes process are embedded throughout the school to promote strong student engagement, inclusion, sense of belonging and other positive behaviours.

Our school considers that a positive approach to behaviour is desirable to foster a school climate within which personal responsibility and self-discipline will be developed.

The whole school, including staff and students, agree to follow the Tribes agreements and School Values: Tribes Agreements:

Attentive Listening

Mutual Respect

Participation/Responsibility to participate

Appreciation/No put downs

Personal Best

The Wonga Park Primary School values are available online at: [*pop on website and link](#)

Mission Statement

To provide a nurturing, engaging and innovative learning environment that develops students who are healthy, caring and connected community members, who have a love of learning and strive for excellence. To develop value, knowledge and skills that enable students to become self-reliant, inclusive, resilient and effective members of an ever changing global community.

Our Statement of Values is available online at:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/588a97a146c3c4372c956a32/t/60ab67679c502460496c1eff/1621845863838/Statement+of+Values+and+School+Philosophy+Policy.pdf>

3. Engagement strategies

Wonga Park Primary School endeavours to support both families and individuals. We aim to respond to the diverse learning needs of students by encouraging continuous improvement across our learning community and regularly evaluate pedagogy and school programs. Teachers participate in Professional Learning to provide the best possible practices to address the needs of each student in the school. Consultants and critical friends have collaborated with staff to improve, enhance and reflect on teaching and learning.

Students are provided with opportunities to take on meaningful responsibilities and to engage in extra curricular activities throughout their time at Wonga Park Primary School. Student responsibilities include; Student Voice, Green Team, ICT Reps, Schools Captains and Grade 6 Tribes leaders. The Expressions program has given students the opportunity to pursue interests in all areas of the curriculum.

The student wellbeing team provides opportunities to enhance social skills and resilience, as well as prevent and minimise welfare issues such as; anxiety, negative body image and low self esteem.

We foster smooth transitions from kinder to prep, grade 6 to year 7 and as our students transition through all year levels throughout the school. Our early years curriculum which embraces curiosity and a love of learning through a developmentally appropriate program, that uses an inquiry model and is experiential based. Pre school students are given many opportunities to visit the school and experience a variety of school activities through our transition program. Our buddy program sees all prep student partnered with a Grade 6 buddy for their first year of schooling. Grade 6 students work with staff and our school counsellor to support their transition to secondary school.

We value community involvement in our students' education. The high level of community interest and involvement in school programs is the essence and foundation of learning and engagement within our community. The partnerships committee (of school council) create community events such as trivia nights to raise funds for our school. In 2019, we introduced *Fathers of the Oak*, to actively engage the Dad's in our community. Parent volunteers are highly valued and support our curriculum programs through things such as; support in the classrooms, attending excursions and participation in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program.

As a community, we believe that student wellbeing requires a 'whole school' child centred approach and therefore teachers, parents and children are provided with opportunities to discuss and develop action plans to respond to each student's social, emotional, cultural, cognitive, learning, health and welfare needs.

We believe full attendance maximises every students ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach each student effectively. Student attendance is monitored on a daily basis (refer to the school's student attendance policy).

Wonga Park Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students. 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 whole school, year group specific and individual engagement strategies used by our school include:

Whole School

- 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 wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- committed to promoting gender equality and respectful relationships
- 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 assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students engage in subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations

- teachers at Wonga Park Primary School ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction is delivered to students to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons

- teachers at Wonga Park 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 values 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 formally in school assemblies and communication to parents

- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies where necessary

- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Voice Team. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have questions or concerns

-create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school concerts, sports events, arts programs, peer support programs and other whole school events

-all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team, 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: Tribes program, Cyber Safety Project, Kids Hope Mentors

- programs (including camps), incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. promoting self-esteem, supporting anxiety, welcoming new students, welcoming diversity)

- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities) Year Level Specific

- each year group has a Team Leader, a senior teacher 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
- wellbeing staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- wellbeing staff will liaise with external organisations to offer in-school targeted support for students who are vulnerable or have additional needs, including the local church through the 'Kids Hope Mentor' Program, our school chaplain and our school welfare officer

Individual

- All staff are able to make a referral to the Student Wellbeing team when a need or concern is identified for further investigation and support
- Parents are encouraged to make contact with the Student Wellbeing team at any time to discuss concerns for an individual students and peruse avenues of additional support
- Student Support Groups are adopted or all students included in the Program for Students with Disabilities and meet on a regular basis to discuss goal setting and student progress

- Individual Learning Plans are implemented for all students who perform six months or more below year level standard or 12 months above the year level standard in Reading, Writing and Number..
- Behaviour Support Plans are established for any students exhibiting behaviours that do not comply with the school values or are inhibiting learning
- Student Support Services are engaged as appropriate to support students requiring Psychology or Speech Pathology intervention services
- Referrals are made to external agencies including Child First, Department of Human Services – Child Protection

Wonga Park 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 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

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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:

-with a disability

-with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Wonga Park 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. Wonga Park 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
- referral for teachers and other staff members to the Student Wellbeing team
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

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.

A right is something which belongs to you and cannot be taken away by anyone. All students, teachers and parents have rights.

A responsibility is something that you should do without being told. Some of these things you do for others and some you do for yourself. The Tribes agreement of 'No Put Downs' includes not speaking negatively to others and yourself.

Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity and all community members have a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive, inclusive and welcoming. At Wonga Park Primary School, student well being is at all times a shared responsibility of staff, students and parents.

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
- be treated fairly

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program and attend school regularly
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others, including the right to learn and contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and others
- Take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve their goals.

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.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Wonga Park Primary School's Bullying policy. Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole school and classroom practices including;

- the Tribes process establishing fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- providing personalised learning programs, where appropriate for individual students

- consistently acknowledging students
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision making
- providing physical environments conducive of positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Any reports of student bullying behaviour will be responded to immediately and in a consistent manner.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Example School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. 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.

A restorative approach is 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.

Our staged response 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 the Year Level Coordinator*
- *restorative practices*
- *detentions*
- *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 Wonga Park Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Wonga Park 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.
- Ensuring we are adaptable and responsive to changing situations to ensure we support students, teachers and families.

8. Evaluation

Wonga Park 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

Wonga Park 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
- Included in staff induction processes
- Newsletter portal site
- 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

[Include links where possible to your related policies including *Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards*, etc].

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy was last updated on 16th June 2021 and is scheduled for review in June 2023.

