



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the office on 9309 4350.

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.

Westmeadows 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 overview

Westmeadows Primary School has a long and rich history of building a strong bridge to each child's future. The school members of our community, past and present, are connected honouring unique partnerships between students, families and staff. We are located in the heart of Westmeadows creating a country town feel whilst being equipped with modern resources. At Westmeadows Primary School, we are proud of each child and strive to celebrate and develop each of their individual qualities and their ongoing growth and success. Our school embraces diversity, incorporating our student's interests into the classroom, catering to their learning needs. Through targeted teaching and learning, strong guidance from the Victorian Curriculum and school values, staff are committed to forever learning alongside our students. At Westmeadows Primary School, memories are created that last a lifetime.

2. School profile

Westmeadows Primary School is located in an established residential area on the north-west fringe of Melbourne, approximately 16 kilometres from the city centre. The school facilities include sixteen permanent classrooms, a Library, Sports Centre with a full-size gymnasium, art room, music room, conference room and Out of School Care facility. The playground has areas for both active and quiet pastimes, including adventure playgrounds, shaded areas and synthetic grass areas and vegetable gardens. The school has an enrolment ceiling, with student enrolments stable at around 495 students and student attendance above the State Level. The 2024 staffing profile consists of a 1.0 Principal, 1.6 Assistant Principals, 1.0 Leading Teacher, 1.0 Learning Specialist, a 0.6 wellbeing coordinator, the equivalent of 21 full time classroom teachers and 8 part-time specialist teachers. There are also 9 support staff who work in a range of administrative, classroom and student wellbeing support roles. The school curriculum is based on the Victorian Curriculum framework. Programs include all key learning areas with additional specialist classes in Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts LOTE (Italian) and Science. A range of targeted strategies are provided to students who require additional learning support. Westmeadows Primary School also offers additional programs such as Interschool Sport, swimming, camp, lunchtime activities, student leadership opportunities and tailored transition programs.

3. School mission, vision, expectations and values

MISSION

Together, building the bridge to be your best.

VISION

Together, we will foster a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment for all members of our school community. We commit to the holistic growth and success of every individual.

EXPECTATIONS

Be safe

Be a learner
Be your best

VALUES

Respect
Cooperation
Honesty
Care & Compassion
Responsibility

4. Engagement strategies

Westmeadows 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 wellbeing
- 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, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Westmeadows Primary School use an Instructional Model 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 Westmeadows 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 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 at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including Class Meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- All students can be referred to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, 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:
 - E-Smart
 - Life Ed
 - Family Life
 - Responsible Pet Ownership
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. Life Skills)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy program

Targeted

- each year group has a PLC Leader, a 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
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

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

5. Identifying students in need of support

Westmeadows 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Westmeadows 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

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 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 Westmeadows Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Westmeadows 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
- 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 PLC Leader
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension

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 Westmeadows 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

Westmeadows 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.
- Inviting parents to assemblies and other special events such as our Remembrance Day Ceremony, ANZAC Day Ceremony, Foundation Picnic and Three-Way Conference.

8. Evaluation

Westmeadows 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
- SOCS

Westmeadows 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
- Referred to during in transition information sessions.
- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- 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

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

The above policies are available on the school's website.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2024
Consultation	School Council – 2.9.24 Student Voice Agents 13.8.24 School Community – available on website from 12.8.24
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2026