

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy - July 2023

(Child Safe Standard 5)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school.

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.

Lalor East 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
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

Policy

School Profile

Lalor East Primary School opened in 1972 in an established residential area of Thomastown (Approx 30 km north from Melbourne CBD) and serves a multicultural community. At the time of writing this policy, the current enrolment is 223 students.

By the end of their primary school education, our aim is for every child to be Literate, Numerate, Happy and Healthy and to reflect our values through their individual actions and active participation in our local and global community. We believe that every child can learn and we are committed to ensuring that students develop to their full capacity. Our school values are Respect, Honesty, Cooperation, Caring and Personal Best. These values underpin our decision making and interactions with each other and our broader school community.

Our School Strategic Plan focuses on improving student outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. Key actions that will contribute to this improvement are the introduction of a school wide instructional model and the use of peer observation and feedback. A consistent writing model is used across the school and has contributed to improvement in student outcomes in this area. Teaching teams meet weekly in PLCs to plan lessons and to assess, monitor and review student progress. Programs operate across the school to extend students and to identify and address any learning concerns.

Specialist programs include Physical Education, Digital Technologies and Music. Spanish is during Music lessons through a Content Language Integrated Learning approach. We also operate a play based Oral Language Program for students in Prep to Year 2. Classroom teachers deliver Library sessions.

Student voice and agency is valued at our school through our Junior School Council and Cyber Action Team. Students sit as representatives on various sub committees and frequently work together with staff on school improvement initiatives.

Our school utilises the School Wide Positive Behaviours Program System (SWPBS) to educate and address student behaviour and is a lead school for the Respectful Relationships program.

Our school has worked hard to build strong connections with families and community organisations as we believe these relationships and opportunities help to improve educational expectations and support student engagement and achievement. Our strong partnerships with The Smith Family, Berry Street, Whittlesea Council, Eat Up and Semper Dental are integral to our work. Playgroups operate at our school on Monday (Berry Street) and Wednesday (Whittlesea Council) mornings. We operate a daily breakfast club and a weekly learning club. TheirCare operate Before And After School Care.

In 2019, the Victorian Government allocated \$8.9 million through the state budget to Lalor East Primary School as part of the Permanent Modular School Buildings Program. This project was completed at the beginning of 2021 and saw the modernisation of the teaching and administration wings at the school. Teachers utilise a co-teaching model that sees two or more teachers work together to plan, teach, assess and monitor student wellbeing needs. Breakout rooms provide space for intervention, extension and small group work. Dedicated spaces are also available to support STEAM.



The school has a strong commitment to the innovative use of Digital Technologies. Classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards with pods of laptops, iPads, surfaces and desktop computers available to support teaching and learning programs. The Multipurpose Centre provides excellent additional, flexible learning spaces for Physical Education, Music and class/whole school activities.

School Values, Philosophy and Vision

Lalor East Primary School recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

Our Statement of Values sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Our Statement of Values acknowledges that parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

A copy of our Statement of Values is available on our school website or by requesting a copy from our office staff.

Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Lalor East 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.

Our school utilises a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to cater for the individual needs of students. 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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 (eg: Compass chronicles) and school level assessment data
- teachers at Lalor East Primary School use our 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 Lalor East 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 is recognised through our 'Focus on the Good' recognition program
- 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 Junior School Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through music programs (choir & bands), wellbeing clubs and peer support programs.
- students are welcome to make an appointment with Area Level Leaders, Wellbeing Support Staff, 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 Respectful Relationships
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs
- 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.



Targeted

- each year group has an Area Level Leader who is responsible for the students in their cohort by monitoring 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 – refer to our Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy for further information. All Koorie students are supported with an Individual Education Plan.
- our English as an Additional 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 including through strategies outlined in our *Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy - Establishing a culturally safe environment (Child Safe Standard 1)*
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through partnerships with Foundation House and support from our Multicultural Education Aide.
- 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
- wellbeing and health 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
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- 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](#)

Individual

Lalor East 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 (eg: changing the classroom set up)
- provision of on-site service delivery for students accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services, Senior Wellbeing & Engagement Officer, Visiting Teacher Service, Primary School Nurse
 - 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 and Absence Learning 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.

1. Identifying students in need of support

Lalor East 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.

Lalor East 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:

- 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and our Behaviour Matrix.

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, Lalor East 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.

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 Area 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 Lalor East Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21. Only principals have authority to make the decision to suspend a student. This authority cannot be delegated.

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

Engaging with families

Lalor East 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

Lalor East 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
- student leadership forums
- incidents (Compass Chronicle) data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS Referrals

Lalor East Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards (eg: Compass Pulse, Panoram) 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 as annual reference in school newsletter
- 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 Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

Policy Review and Approval

This policy is a registration requirement for the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and a requirement of the Department of Education and Training under *Ministerial Order No 1359*

This policy will be reviewed every two years as part of the school policy review cycle, following changes to Departmental legislation and guidelines or at times that the Principal forms the opinion that the policy warrants a review.



Approval

Created date	1 March 2023
Consultation	School Staff, Student Leadership Team, School Council
Endorsed by	School Council Linda Richards, Principal
Endorsed on	18 July 2023
Next review date	July 2025

