

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Orchard Park Primary School on 03 5947 9100 or orchard.park.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

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.

Orchard 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, 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 and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

School profile

Orchard Park Primary School is situated on a 3.5-hectare site at 291 Pink Hill Boulevard, Officer. The school is located in South Eastern Victoria Region. Orchard Park PS provides for Foundation to Year 6 students and opened at the beginning of 2021. The school has been designed for a long-term enrolment of 525.

Orchard Park Primary School has developed close ties to the local community, and enjoys support from our local shops and community services. We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

School values, philosophy and vision

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Orchard Park Primary School's values are:

- **SAFETY**

We ensure a safe environment by following rules that protect everyone. We are mindful of our actions, whether in the classroom, playground, or online, and we take responsibility for keeping ourselves and others safe.

- **RESPECT**

We respect ourselves, our school, and each other, understanding that our attitudes and behaviors have a significant impact on those around us.

- **RESPONSIBILITY**

Responsibility at Orchard Park means taking ownership of our actions and making choices that reflect our commitment to our school community. We are accountable for our learning, behavior, and how we treat others.

- **RESILIENCE**

We value resilience as the ability to bounce back from challenges and keep moving forward, even when things get tough. At Orchard Park, we encourage a growth mindset, where mistakes are seen as opportunities to learn. We support each other in building the strength to persevere, fostering an environment where effort and determination lead to success.

Vision

Orchard Park Primary School is committed to working collaboratively to ensure high levels of learning for ALL students. This enables each student to be successful in any field they choose. At Orchard Park Primary School, we continuously strive to improve our practice in order to achieve the best outcomes for every student we serve. Strong and positive relationships are fostered with all members of the school community to create a safe, connected and student-centred environment. OPPS is held in high regard within their community and the wider education field.

Mission

It is the mission of Orchard Park Primary School to educate all students with the essential skills and knowledge to become resilient and lifelong learners who are active and positive members of their community.

Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Orchard Park 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

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- 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 Orchard Park Primary School use an 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 Orchard 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'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 are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Leadership Team 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
 - Berry Street
 - School Wide Positive Behaviours
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

Considering the school's location in a new estate, the school leadership team is conscious of the need to engage students and build a supportive school culture, and will do this through the following initiatives:

- Engaging with local early childhood centres;
- Opening opportunities for parents to provide literacy support
- Focusing on Student Leadership and Voice in developing Houses and community events each term

Targeted

- each year group has 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.
- 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

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- 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 including through the celebration and acknowledgment of significant cultural events and holidays from the diverse backgrounds of our students, such as Lunar New Year, Diwali, Eid, and Harmony Day.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through
 - Trauma-Informed Practice: Our staff are trained in trauma-informed approaches to better understand and support students from refugee backgrounds who may have experienced trauma. This includes creating a safe and predictable learning environment and providing emotional support through counsellors or wellbeing teams.
 - Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion Initiatives: We celebrate and respect the diverse cultural backgrounds of our refugee students by incorporating their stories, traditions, and experiences into our curriculum and school events, helping to build a more inclusive and understanding school culture.
- 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](#)
 - We respect and support students in using their preferred names and pronouns. We also provide flexible uniform options, allowing students to wear clothing they feel comfortable in, regardless of gender.
 - Our staff undergo regular professional development on gender diversity, LGBTIQ+ inclusivity, and how to create supportive learning environments. This helps staff to understand the challenges LGBTIQ+ students may face and equips them to respond with empathy and respect.
- 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](#)

Individual

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Lookout

Orchard 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

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- 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.

Orchard Park Primary School will use the following strategies to ensure the student wellbeing needs of all students transferring into Orchard Park Primary School are supported:

- Students from a government school will have their data automatically transferred via CASES21. See: Policy Advisory Library – Student transfer information.
- Students transferring from non-government schools will have to complete an enrolment form.
- Orchard Park Primary School will request reports and a transition statement from the previous school/s including information on any foreseeable risks.
- Students transferring from existing schools will attend a transition session specific to their year level

If required, interviews with prospective students and families will be held understand student needs and to support transition. This may also include working with the student's previous school (government or non government) and establishing a Student Support Group.

Identifying students in need of support

Orchard Park Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team; consisting of the Principal, Assistant Principal and other identified staff, plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Orchard 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

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- 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, 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 and management

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 Orchard Park Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Orchard Park 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:

- following the steps as per our Behaviour Pathway
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Leadership Team
- restorative practices
- behaviour reviews
- 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 Orchard Park 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.

Engaging with families

Orchard 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.

Evaluation

Orchard 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



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

- parent survey
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Orchard 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

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](#)
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	02/09/2024
Consultation	School Council - 04/09/2024
Approved by	Nathan Jagoe - Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before September 2026