

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 at 5182 5688.

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

Yarram 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Yarram Primary School provides a positive learning environment that equips students to contribute productively in a global community, challenging and intellectually engaging students at their point of need.

Located within the township of Yarram, 220 km southeast of Melbourne in the Wellington Shire, Yarram Primary School (YPS) No. 693 has educated the local children from Yarram and District since 1861. The school is the centrepiece of the community and is proud of what it offers in a small rural town. We have a modern facility, only five years old, with beautifully designed learning spaces. Several of these areas are open learning spaces that facilitate collaboration across classrooms, where students enjoy flexible seating and have opportunities to work with peers in and out of their home groups. Our open learning spaces have built a culture where students see all teachers as "their teacher," and teachers see all students as "their student."

Yarram Primary School has a dynamic mix of experience amongst our staff. A highly experienced and capable Education Support team work alongside our teachers to deliver timely and targeted interventions. We continue to achieve our strategic vision for the school due to embedded processes and structures. Classroom instructional strategies are in line with evidence-based practices, including Readers' and Writers' Workshops, systematic synthetic phonics instruction and intervention, School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports and the Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships program. We implement a highly engaging curriculum from P-6 including specialist visual arts, performing arts and physical education programs. Our library is timetabled for class access. We offer a variety of additional before school and lunchtime activities, including running club, Lego club, lunchtime art, and drama club, all of which are designed to inspire and deepen student interests and passions. A highly popular breakfast club operates three mornings per week and is lovingly and efficiently run by ES staff.

Yarram Primary School implements supportive practices to ensure successful transitions for students and families in and out of the school. We host a comprehensive transition program for our incoming Prep students, ensuring they are confident and comfortable when they begin formal schooling. We work closely with Yarram Secondary College to facilitate an equally smooth transition for our graduating grade sixes. By working collaboratively with colleagues at both ends of the primary school spectrum and maintaining high levels of communication within our own school we are able to facilitate positive and successful transitions for all students as they move through their primary years of schooling.

Students who receive Program for Students with Disabilities funding are well supported socially and academically to achieve their potential, as are students with additional learning needs and highly capable students. We operate targeted Minilit and Macqlit reading intervention programs to support readers needing additional instruction.

At Yarram Primary School we continually update ICT tools to ensure our equipment is contemporary, useful and relevant to curriculum delivery. Our multipurpose facility houses a half basketball court, cooking area, disabled facilities, library, music facility and general purpose area and is available to school and community groups. We also have a terrific art facility, basketball / netball courts, a barbecue area, four separate play areas, productive vegetable garden, large oval and covered sandpit which has a ready supply of fabulous equipment available to children at recess and lunchtime.

Student leadership is promoted through our Junior School Council and House Captains. Students in Years 3-6 are elected by peers to form our Junior School Council, where students develop skills in activism, raising awareness and funds related to school, local, national, and global issues of concern. House Captains take a more formal role including meeting and greeting visitors, leading assemblies and school events where appropriate, and leading events in our four school houses - Grevillea,

Eucalyptus, Wattle and Banksia. Parent and community partnerships provide a strong support network, rich in extra curricular opportunities and two way interactions.

We have a valued group of parent volunteers that support school fundraising and events. Local traditions include active participation in the annual Tarra Festival (Covid permitting), the Yarram Eisteddfod, Anzac/Remembrance Day, and the Yarram Show (Covid permitting). We participate in educational and community initiatives such as NAIDOC Week, Education Week, Parks Week and Children's Book Week. Yarram Early Learning operate a dynamic after school and vacation care program on the school premises.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Values	Motto	Learn, Share, Be Happy
	Learn	Learning with <i>high expectations, commitment</i>
	Share	<i>Respect and trust, teamwork, local traditions</i>
	Be Happy	Having fun

Philosophy

Our mission is to continue to develop a learning environment which supports individuals to achieve their full potential - academically, emotionally and physically - and to equip them to contribute productively in a global community.

At YPS we:

- ❖ believe all children have the capacity and right to learn in a safe inclusive environment
- ❖ recognise and plan for different learning styles and abilities to support children to reach their full potential
- ❖ implement curriculum through programs that are relevant and make meaningful connections to students' lives
- ❖ make a strong commitment to student learning, supported by quality teaching practice, regular team planning and ongoing professional learning by our dedicated team
- ❖ develop genuine connections with students to make them feel both valued and important to the fabric of our school
- ❖ acknowledge and embrace diversity within our school, the broader and global community
- ❖ inspire our students to be active contributors to their community, take pride in their involvement and, in turn, welcome support from our community

YPS's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values at every opportunity.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

YPS 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 important 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.

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, 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 and school level assessment data.
- Teachers use the YPS 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 YPS 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 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 Junior School Council and other forums including year group meetings and house captain leadership meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, student wellbeing staff, assistant principal and principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for multi age connections amongst students through athletics, music programs, house events, community events, peer support programs and extra curricular activities.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to Education Support Staff, teachers, 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:
 - Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships
 - Bounce Back
 - Circle Time
 - Friendly Kids Friendly Classrooms
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. upstander programs, Life Education).
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities).

- Buddy programs, peer support programs, house activities.
- 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 home group teacher monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their group, and acts 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.
- 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.

Individual

YPS 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 students and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Education 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 health professionals, Headspace, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or Orange Door

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

4. Identifying students in need of support

YPS 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. YPS 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

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.

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.**

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

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.

Student misbehaviour will be responded to consistently with YPS's Behaviour Expectations Matrix. When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Yarram 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 assistant principal or principal
- 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 Yarram 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.

7. Engaging with families

Yarram 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
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with 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.

8. Evaluation

Yarram 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 (Student Online Case System)

Yarram 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
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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

Policy last reviewed	August 2022
Consultation	School Council, Education Subcommittee, Teaching staff August 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024