

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT 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

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 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. 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

### 1. School profile

YPS provides a positive learning environment and a 21st century skill base. This supports individuals to achieve their full potential; academically, emotionally and physically, to equip them to contribute productively in a global community. 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.

YPS 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 targetted interventions. We continue to achieve our strategic vision for the school due to embedded processes and structures.

There is a growing diverse cultural representation amongst our school community which reflects a similar trend in our local community. We continue to build supportive practices to ensure successful transitions for students and families in and out of the school. We also have a significant element of transience amongst our student population.

Students who receive Program for Students with Disabilities and Impairments funding are well supported socially and academically to achieve their potential as are students with additional learning needs and highly capable students.

Current initiatives include: components of School-Wide Positive Behaviour system, international collaboration between our students and our sister schools - Colegio Ward in Argentina and Yizhuang Primary School in China and a highly engaging curriculum from P-6 including eSmart, multi cultural education - a specialist visual arts, music and physical education program. Additional music lessons are outsourced to private professional instrumental teachers. Our library is timetabled for class access and open for students at lunchtimes. It is well maintained by our passionate ES staff. A highly popular breakfast club operates three mornings per week and is lovingly and efficiently run by ES staff.

At YPS we continually update ICT tools to ensure our equipment is contemporary, useful and relevant to curriculum delivery.

We moved into our brand new learning and administrative spaces at the commencement of 2018. A 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, school pets, large oval and covered sandpit that has a ready supply of fabulous equipment available to children at recess and lunchtime.

Student voice is a strength with nominated students from Years 3-6 forming a Junior School Council. It has a welfare/wellbeing focus. House captains and vice captains take a more formal role including meeting and greeting visitors, leading assemblies and school events where appropriate.

At YPS, families are supported to value attendance and timely contact is initiated to investigate any emerging patterns of poor attendance and the reasons are addressed.

Parent and community partnerships provide a strong support network, rich in extra curricula opportunities and two-way interactions. Local traditions include active participation in the annual Tarra Festival, Yarram Eisteddfod, Anzac/Remembrance Day, Landcare and the Yarram Show. We also participate in educational initiatives such as the Naidoc Week, Education Week and Children's Book Week. We visit local nursing homes and perform for Probus and the elderly annually.

Yarram Early Learning operate a dynamic out of school hours and vacation care program on school premises.

## 2. School purpose, values and philosophy

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

## Philosophy

Learn, Share, Be Happy

Our mission is to continue to develop a learning environment which supports individuals to achieve their full potential; academically, emotionally and physically 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. Engagement strategies

YPS 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, 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 use a 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 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 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 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 ESS, 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:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Bounce Back
  - Circle Time
  - Friendly Kids Friendly Classrooms
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. upstander programs, Family Life, Life Education).
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities).
- Buddy programs, peer support programs, house activities.

### Targetted

- 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.
- Connect all Koori students with a Koori 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.
- 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

- Student Support Groups, see:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and/or Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services

- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Navigator
- Lookout
- Compass

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 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 health professionals, Headspace, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or ChildFirst
  - re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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
  
- 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 (low or high achieving students)
- 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, 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 values. Student misbehaviour will be responded to consistently with YPS's Behaviour Expectations Matrix - see over. (When a student acts in breach of the YPS Behaviour Expectations Matrix, including bullying behaviour.)

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

## 7. Engaging with families

YPS 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

YPS 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

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Attendance Policy

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in March 2021