



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 52214047.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

South Geelong 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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Policy

1. School profile

South Geelong Primary School was established in 1879 and is situated close to the central business district of Geelong. This location provides ready access to historic, arts, sporting, and beach front facilities. The school has a strong history with families and businesses within the Geelong area. It prides itself on being student focussed and has a motto of 'Aim High'. South Geelong Primary School offers its 345 students an attractive, safe, and stimulating learning environment with specialised programs operating for Performing Arts, Visual Art, Physical Education and Sports.

All classes operate in modern and permanent buildings, with refurbishments made to the original heritage building. New links between the original and new school buildings have created open and vibrant learning spaces. Extensive rejuvenation and landscaping have occurred on the site to ensure all outdoor areas include a mix of active and passive environments. Flexible double classrooms operate in most areas and community hubs provide shared and interactive learning spaces. A multi-purpose building is used for community events, specialist programs and Outside School Hours Care.

A strong sense of community exists within the school with parents, staff and students working closely together in many contexts. We encourage parents to be greatly involved in the school on a day-to-day basis. Special Friends Day, open mornings and information sessions are all strongly supported by families. A Community Carnival every second year, alternates with a Family Dance night, is widely supported by local businesses and many families within and beyond the school.

Our staff work hard to provide a teaching pedagogy reflective of 21st century designs including ICT rich environments and personalised learning for every student. Educational programs reflect the Victorian Curriculum and focus on continuous improvement to achieve excellence in teaching and learning at every level. The school strives for high academic achievement, particularly in English and Mathematics, and provides quality learning in all other curriculum areas. Programs are designed to cater for the individual needs of a diverse range of students. This includes a variety of support programs, enrichment opportunities and student leadership initiatives. An emphasis upon inquiry-based studies and the integration of Information and Communication Technologies provides an exciting and flexible learning program designed to meet students' needs. South Geelong Primary School is strongly committed to the provision of a wide range of learning activities for all students to maximise their potential. There is an emphasis on teacher excellence, and skills and knowledge with new and current best practices and pedagogies being implemented and strengthened. All teachers work in Professional Learning Teams with coaching, mentoring and collegiate observations being used to support learning and embed whole school practice.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

South Geelong Primary School'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 of respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

Our Vision:

Our students will be aspirational students who are valuable community members.

They will be:

- Successful learners
- Confident, creative and curious
- Active and informed citizens.

Our Statement of Values is available on the school website

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

South Geelong 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.

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 South Geelong Primary School use Gradual Release of Responsibility as our instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at South Geelong 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
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through learning buddies, lunchtime programs, class buddies, Junior School Council.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to their Classroom Teacher, Education Support Officers, 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 a policy of shared learning 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:
 - Berry St
 - School Wide Positive Behaviours
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers

- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. social interactions, anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, learning buddies
- Meet the Family interviews

Targeted

- each classroom teacher is responsible for their class, monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their class, 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
- 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
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds
- 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 \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- 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
- 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

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Disability Inclusion Profiles
- referral to Student Support Services
- referral to Child First, Headspace
- Lookout Centre for Out of Home Care students
- Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- Mental Health toolkit

South Geelong 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, Orange Door, Geelong English Language Centre.

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
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

South Geelong 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. South Geelong 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

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. 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.

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, South Geelong Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Students will be warned their behaviour is inappropriate. Where necessary, 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 Team Leader → Assistant Principal/Leadership → Student Support Services
- 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 South Geelong 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

South Geelong 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.

8. Evaluation

South Geelong 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

South Geelong 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
- Included in staff online manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- 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

Policy last reviewed	Aug 2024
Consultation	School Council- August 28th Meeting 6
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Aug 2026