



Wales Street Primary School

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Policy No.1.14

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.

Wales Street 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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POLICY

1. School profile

Wales Street Primary School was established in 1891 and is located approximately 6 kilometres north of Melbourne. We have 585 students enrolled from Foundation to Year 6 and 50+ school staff members including a school nurse, a wellbeing coordinator, two Assistant Principals and one Principal.

Our school grounds are located in the inner city suburb of Thornbury, and we are surrounded by a supportive community. Most students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their

bike to school. Wales Street 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.

Wales Street Primary School is an accredited International Baccalaureate, Primary Years Programme world school. Our curriculum model is a trans-disciplinary, concept-driven program which utilises inquiry learning approaches while developing a range of research, thinking, social, self-management and communication skills. The school believes that this approach will develop students' self-esteem, the ability to think independently, and the confidence to apply their knowledge and abilities to the challenges that lie ahead with enthusiasm, confidence and commitment.

Through the implementation of the IB Primary Years Programme, Wales Street Primary School aspires to develop students who display the attributes of the learner profile and who are: caring, courageous, open-minded, principled, balanced, reflective, communicators, thinkers, inquirers and knowledgeable.

These values provide a framework for the development of self-esteem, resilience, leadership, positive role modelling and a sense of community.

Wales Street Primary School will operate according to the following principles:

- The educational needs of the students will be the primary consideration in all decision making.
- The School Council, staff and community will ensure mutual respect between all participants.
- All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect.
- Students have the right to learn without distraction in a secure/safe environment, where they are encouraged to fully develop their talents, interests and ambitions.
- Parents have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which expectations of care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others will be encouraged.
- Teachers have the right to expect that they will be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and cooperation.
- Parents have an obligation to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.
- Principal and staff have an obligation to fairly; reasonably and consistently manage student behaviour.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Our Mission and Vision:

Wales Street Primary School is an internationally minded community school dedicated to lifelong learning, helping to students achieve their personal best.

We achieve this by:

- Fostering inquiring students, who enjoy learning, are creative and self-motivated
- Enabling students to become active members in the local and global community
- Encouraging students to be reflective thinkers who are socially, environmentally and globally aware
- Celebrating growth and success

3. Engagement strategies

Wales Street 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

Our Strategic Plan was developed to include:

- 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 and Staff at our school:

- use an the IB-PYP framework aligned with the Victorian Curriculum to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- 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
- understand that 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 plan transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- support positive behaviour and student achievement through acknowledgement 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

All 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.
- are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Year Group Leaders, 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

- Bully Stoppers
- Resilience Project
- Child Wise
- 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, Peer support programs

Targeted

- *each year group has a Year Leader/Coordinator, 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 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,
- 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
- Navigator
- Lookout

Wales Street 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

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.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Wales Street 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. Our 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.

Our students are taught two main rights that apply to all:

- **Everyone has the right to learn without distraction**
- **Everyone has the right to feel safe and comfortable.**

These rights are supported by shared communal responsibility to maintain these rights by all students, staff and parents/carers. These rights apply to inside and outside the classroom.

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 Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Wales Street Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Wales Street 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:

- 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 Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- Detention
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

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

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

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

7. Engaging with families

Wales Street 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 Communication 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

Wales Street 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
- SOCS

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Child Safe Standards and Policies

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/safeenviro.aspx>

Respectful Relationships:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx>

REVIEW CYCLE

Version	Edited by/Comments	Next review
1	Ratified by School Council	2014
2	Reviewed and ratified	2019
3	Reviewed/Aligned with SPAG guidelines and VRQA 2019	2022