



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT and WELLBEING POLICY

Warrnambool East Primary School is extremely proud of our positive school climate, and the staff work relentlessly to ensure that Student Engagement and Wellbeing policies and programs are implemented with consistency and rigour.



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Warrnambool East Primary School on 5562 4100 or warrnambool.east.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.

At Warrnambool East Primary School, we aim to foster a safe and positive learning environment for students and staff through a consistent approach to student engagement, wellbeing and behaviour management. 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.

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Rights and responsibilities
6. Student behaviour expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation
9. Communication

1. School Profile Statement

Established in 1958, Warrnambool East Primary School is situated in the coastal town of Warrnambool, about 260km southwest of Melbourne. Our school grounds are extensive, including large grassed areas and playgrounds for our students to enjoy.

WEPS is one of four government schools in the City of Warrnambool and has an enrolment of 490-500 students and is staffed by a Principal, Assistant Principal, 38 teaching staff and 15 support staff. Supporting students in learning and wellbeing are a school-based Social Worker, Leading Teacher (Curriculum), Leading Teacher (Diversity and Inclusion), Mental Health Practitioner, Learning Specialist (Literacy) and Learning Specialist (Numeracy).

Warrnambool East Primary School (WEPS) is committed to providing its students with an inspiring and challenging education in a friendly environment where everyone is respected, valued and feels a sense of belonging. There is a commitment to continuous improvement and achieving excellence in teaching and learning in all areas of the school.

The school has a welcoming mantra and considers itself an inclusive school community for all. WEPS is proactive in maximising educational opportunities for all students with a range of wellbeing supports ensuring that students are supported and ready to learn.

Warrnambool East Primary School aims to progress and engage all learners. WEPS provides a range of specialist teaching to complement the quality Literacy, Numeracy and Inquiry learning programs, and these include Science, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Languages (Indonesian), Humanities (Indigenous Perspectives and Global perspectives) and Physical Education. Our Thrive program delivers a range of learning opportunities to develop the whole child to be the best person and best learner they can be.

2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

Our school believes that children learn best in an environment that fosters personal responsibility and accountability. Our primary rights at Warrnambool East Primary School are for the students to learn, teachers to teach and for everyone to feel and be safe, valued and included.

Warrnambool East Primary School's vision is that through a culture of nurture and inclusion and high-quality teaching, all students can flourish as learners, and as proud members of their school, local and global community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values: Be Respectful, Be Safe, Be a Learner and Be Kind, at every opportunity.

3. Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Warrnambool East 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:

- Quality teaching and learning that is meticulously planned, implemented and evaluated to maximize students' access to learning and to build their love and passion for learning.
- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- 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.
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued.
- Positive reinforcement and acknowledgment of achievement with recognition at School Assemblies, in the Newsletter, Values stickers, recorded on Compass, along with notes and calls to parents at home.
- Involvement of students in the decision-making and problem-solving processes of the school through Year 6 leadership roles and Student Voice team.
- Through modelling of behaviours, we aim to develop a culture where all staff, parents, visitors and students demonstrate the values we expect. These include dress and uniform codes, punctuality, use of appropriate language, giving appreciations, modelling respect and acknowledging differences.
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling.
- Acting consistently and fairly in implementing discipline measures and articulating these to all parties.
- Making expectations explicit and working with children on what these expectations look like, sound like, feel like.
- Explicit teaching of social skills including role plays, in small groups and classes using the personal and interpersonal domains of the Victorian Curriculum.
- A range of programs are offered to extend student engagement, including Specialist classes in Science, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, and Physical Education. Opportunities are explored as they arise to build on student strengths, extend experiences and build self-esteem. Examples of partnerships include those with Deakin University and Melbourne Zoo.
- Dedicated units of work around health and wellbeing which are supported by programs such as Community Mentoring, Nurture and Sensory Programs, Respectful Relationships and Zones of Regulation, School Wide Positive Behaviour framework.
- Student Safety Plans will be developed for children presenting with safety concerns.
- Individual Education Plans for, PSD students, Koorie students, and students in out of home care, as well as those students considered at risk of continuing academic progress
- 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.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team, 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

Targeted:

- each Learning Community has a Learning Community Leader, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, 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 Language Background other than English students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- 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 termly 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 staff will undertake relevant professional 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:

Warrnambool East 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 family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, Orange Door, 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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

[Student Support Groups](#)

[Individual Education Plans](#)

[Behaviour – Students](#)

[Behaviour Support Plans](#)

[Student Support Services](#)

[Program for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Mental health toolkit](#)

[headspace](#)

[Navigator](#)

[LOOKOUT](#)

4. Identifying students in need of support

Warrnambool East 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. Warrnambool East 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 and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

5. Rights and Responsibilities

Warrnambool East Primary School creates an environment where the entire school community can feel safe, secure and supported. It is about building an environment where the diversity of staff, students and their families is recognised and respected.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, including the cultural safety of children from culturally/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. We provide a safe environment for all children including vulnerable students and students with a disability.

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

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, Example 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 implement 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:

- reminding 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 school Diversity and Inclusion Leader
- referral to school Mental Health practitioner

- restorative practices
- 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 Warrnambool East 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

Warrnambool East 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 in 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

Warrnambool East 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

Warrnambool East 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.

9. 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 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](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- 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	June 2025
Consultation	LINK July 2025 School Council July 2025 Staff Bulletin July 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2027

Is it compulsory for all Victorian government schools to have a policy addressing this issue?	Yes, a school policy addressing this issue is required by the Minimum Standards for school registration and by Regulation 23 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017.
Does this policy have to be approved by school council?	No
Recommended consultation	Regulation 23 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 states that principals should develop the school's Student Engagement policy in consultation with the wider school community including school leaders, teachers, students and parents. School council should therefore be consulted and its views should be taken into account when you adopt this policy. Specifically there are sections in the template that are marked in yellow which need to be tailored to your school community.
What is the basis of this policy?	• Reg 23, Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic) • Minimum Standards for school registration • The Department's Policy and Advisory Library: Student Engagement • Common law duty of care
Recommended review cycle	1-2 years