



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Avenel Primary School on (03) 5796 2264 or avenel.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.

Avenel 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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POLICY

1. School profile

Avenel Primary School is proud of its community spirit; it's caring and nurturing for all, the team work between the staff, students, parents and School Council. The welfare of all students is paramount. The school aims to provide optimal learning opportunities for every student across all curriculum areas, as outlined in the Victorian Curriculum. Our future vision is to be a family-based community of learning, which supports all members in a happy and safe environment.

As a school community, we aspire to be a friendly place to learn, work and visit, to be a school where our children are known individually, where our staff is progressive and forward-thinking and to be a school which is committed to success and belonging for every student. There is a strong sense of ownership by our small village community with good humour, honesty, tolerance and hard work involved.

Avenel Primary School Council and staff continue to advance the interests of our students through working together towards the realisation of common goals in education. Our decisions on long term vision and short term priorities have been driven by data; our actions and practices directed by best available modern research. We have developed whole school team teaching approaches and a stage, not age organisation of student learning groups. Our school is committed to developing strong literacy and numeracy classroom teaching practices with clearly articulated lesson foci and success criteria and an inquiry learning philosophy.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Avenel 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.

The vision of Avenel Primary School is to *"To inspire academic excellence, social and emotional growth and community contribution in a collaborative environment."*

Respectful relationships are the basis of our school community. Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. We pride ourselves as a school that promotes community recognition and acceptance of the equality of gender, the equality of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their abilities, their age or specific learning requirements.

While we believe in equality for all, we also emphasise the value of difference. The following values underpin the beliefs of our community and outline what is important in guiding our actions: We value the following behaviours in our school environment:

- Be A Learner – Be interested, ask questions
- Be A Mate – Learn how to be mates
- Give Something Back – make a community contribution.

These behaviours draw from our values which are as follows:

- Inclusion –every face has a place.
- Responsibility – we are responsible for our choices, actions and mindsets
- Commitment to learning – we are here to learn and improve our skills and performance.

- Respect – show respect for others, for evidence, for the rules of our society
- High expectations, high support – we aim high and help each other to succeed.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Engagement strategies

Universal Strategies – Driving Engagement Through Academic Success

Avenel Primary School aims to establish a happy, safe and supportive learning environment where the welfare of all children is a high priority and is maintained as a shared responsibility of the school and the community. Our motto “Creating Great Learners, Growing Good People & Building a caring Community” is a whole community commitment. It means all children at our school can achieve well-rounded success and excellence. We strive to provide a quality education that will enable children to participate and contribute to the community. We want them to become informed, lifelong learners and tolerant and responsible citizens. We strive to foster a positive school environment free of bias and bullying and where children accept and respect the rights and responsibilities of all community members. We encourage children to develop positive and caring relationships with others. We also encourage children to develop a positive self-image and independence. We want them to be engaged in their learning and to feel connected to the school so that they are keen to attend and to participate in a manner that upholds the rights of all community members.

Engaging Students Through Effective Teaching

It is a core belief at Avenel Primary that professional, personalised teaching and learning drives student learning. We believe that when learners know the purpose of their learning, can describe their learning goals and how they can achieve these, then engagement is created. We also believe that social and emotional well-being are the bedrock of academic success. As a school, we are committed to upholding a teaching culture that drives student success through the following features and actions:

Purposeful Teaching & Focus On Teaching & Learning.

At Avenel Primary School, direct teaching is our core pedagogical method. This results from John Hattie’s research which demonstrated that direct instruction has the highest effect size of all pedagogical strategies. We demonstrate this commitment through the following actions:

- By holding the belief that students and their learning are the purposes of a school’s work.
- By creating learning for every student within our school.
- Delivering lessons which have clear learning intentions and success criteria.
- Ensuring our students understand the “what, why and how” of each lesson.
- Using pedagogical strategies which draw from the Literacy and Numeracy placemats.
- Using student data to inform our planning.
- Guaranteeing and protecting 2 hours of literacy and one hour of numeracy instruction each day.
- By thoroughly knowing all of our students – academically, emotionally and socially.
- By developing an engaging curriculum and using engaging methods to deliver that curriculum
- By providing students with frequent task and process level feedback.

High Expectations Of All Learners & Accountability

In very simple terms, we will receive from students what we expect from students. High expectations of all learners is the first rung on the ladder of high achievement. As Richard Elmore states, “the task predicts the performance.”

We demonstrate our commitment to high expectations by:

- Holding the belief that all students can learn.
- Believing that socio-economic circumstances can be overcome.
- Pitching learning tasks at the instructional level of each student.
- Having challenging goals for all students, regardless of their current level of achievement.
- By focussing on student growth rather than raw scores.
- By using data to inform our discussions of what is effective within our own teaching or in our school wide programs.

Accountability

As professionals, we are responsible for the learning growth (social, emotional and academic) of all the students we interact with. We demonstrate this when we:

- Take responsibility for the learning data of the students we teach.
- By examining the effect our teaching is having upon student data
- By tracking individual student improvements / concerns
- Provide parents with an honest, evidence informed picture of their child’s learning.
- Monitor student progress through assessment and use the data from our assessment to inform our teaching.
- Create Individual Learning Plans for students at risk.
- By using a common planning template and publishing our planners on *OneDrive* before the start of each teaching week.

Learning Communities & Stimulating & Secure Learning Environment

At Avenel Primary School, we have led the way in the development of Team Teaching, the fluid grouping of students and in the development of innovative pedagogies. Innovation is the norm and learning and working collaboratively is one of our core beliefs.

We make this belief visible when we do the following:

- By being committed to team-work and team-teaching
- By working collaboratively with our colleagues and mentoring and supporting our fellow teachers.
- Being committed to our own professional growth and setting ourselves challenging goals as part of the PDP process.
- By understanding that constant learning by teachers is fundamental to school improvement
- By supporting our colleagues and working as a team.
- By being open to feedback
- By adopting collective responsibility for the students within our teams.
- By modelling positive mindsets, positive behaviours
- By engaging rather than controlling students.
- By modelling pride in and commitment to our school.
- By maintaining an orderly, disciplined, respectful and engaging school environment.
- By engaging parents and the wider community in our learning program

At Avenel Primary School, we recognise that students are engaged in a wide variety of ways. We ensure that our students understand the values of our school and are explicitly taught the expected behaviours to promote a safe and positive learning environment. Our staff are driven to meet the individual learning needs of all students and provide constructive feedback to ensure each student can reach their full potential. An effective teacher at Avenel Primary School provides a safe, engaging and inclusive learning environment that caters for the individual needs of all students. We encourage students to investigate all aspects of learning which includes building thinking skills, reflection and applying the knowledge that is learnt. Acknowledging the learning outcomes and the achievements of our students is an important aspect of the learning process at Avenel Primary School.

Universal Strategies – Positive Education Framework

Positive Education at Avenel Primary School:

Avenel Primary School's Positive Education program provides a sequenced and comprehensive framework for developing the social and personal capacity of our students. Our Positive Education program is a Foundation to Grade 6 approach comprising the following programs:

Friendology 101 - which focuses on developing friendships skills to create a school culture that promotes positive mental health, wellbeing, and kindness.

Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships-which focuses on developing students' social, emotional and positive relationship skills

The Catching On Early - which focuses on developing age-appropriate knowledge of anatomy and gender concepts.

The E-Smart Program – which focuses on educating, tracking, monitoring and preventing bullying and cyber bullying and educating students as to the risks in the online environment.

The You Can Do It Program – which is used to develop a common language and whole school approach to social and emotional learning.

School Values Program – which focuses on developing students' skills in living out our core school values: Be A Mate, Be A Learner and Give Something Back.

Together, these programs drive our ongoing commitment to establishing a happy, safe and supportive learning environment where the welfare of all children is a high priority and is maintained as a shared responsibility of the school and the community.

Universal – Learning Partnerships

- 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 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

- 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
- 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. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime 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 year group has a Year Group 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
- 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 background through
- 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
- students enrolled under the Department’s international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

Individual

Avenel 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
 - 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 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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Avenel 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. Avenel 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, 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

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

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, Avenel 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 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:

- 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
- 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 Avenel 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

Avenel 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

Avenel 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

Avenel 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 transition and enrolment packs
- 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 and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	11/07/2023
Consultation	School Council 11 th July 2023
Approved by	Carrye Malone Acting Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2025