

# PEARCEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Marcela Varas or Alia Batool 03 9794 7899

### 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.

Pearcedale Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We believe 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 of the 4 Cs – Care, Courtesy, Common-sense and Cooperation.

### SCOPE

This policy applies all the time 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

Pearcedale Primary School was established in 1954 and is located approximately 35 kilometres North of Melbourne. There are approximately 800 students enrolled and 130 school staff members including specialist student wellbeing teachers are employed to ensure optimum wellbeing and engagement.

We are proud of our school facilities, with superb new learning spaces for us to deliver the core curriculum as well as a mix of specialist programs that include, Physical Education, Art, Library, English as an Additional Language, Information Technology and extension activities in Mathematics. We offer several voluntary lunch-time programs for students and are passionate about ensuring our students are provided with opportunities to achieve excellence in artistic and sporting fields because we believe that participation in these programs help ensure our students are well-rounded and healthy in body, mind and soul.

We are surrounded by a supportive community, and most students that attend our school live locally. Pearcedale Primary School has developed close ties to the local community, and enjoys support from our local shops and community services.

Our school is culturally diverse with students from 51 different cultural backgrounds. We are proud of our diversity and pride ourselves on inclusive school community, where we value each other regardless of our differences.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

### 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Pearcedale 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 always demonstrate our '4Cs' - core values of care, courtesy, cooperation and common sense.

Our school's vision is to empower all students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as proud, accomplished, grounded and productive citizens.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://www.dandenongnorthps.vic.edu.au/>

### 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

*Pearcedale Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all of the students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and not isolated. We understand that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at our school, and that the needs of students change over time as they grow, mature 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
- We prioritise positive and caring relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing

- We create and maintain a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive, and *one that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued*
- We welcome all parents/carers and are committed to being responsive to them as partners in learning
- We are responsive to a range of relevant school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data as measures of our success in ensuring wellbeing and engagement among our students.
- We deliver a targeted curriculum to ensure that students are able to access a “learning pathway” that will optimise their learning achievements towards the ultimate goal of self-actualization.
- The teachers at Pearcedale Primary School use our Teaching and Learning Model as an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to guarantee that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- Teachers at Pearcedale 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 –
- 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
- We have structures in place to support students moving into and out of different stages of their schooling
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communications to parents
- We continually monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Students have multiple forums to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations. E.g. through the Student Voice Council, School student Leadership Team and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups, including Peer Mediation. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- We specifically create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through Prep-Buddies, athletics, and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals 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 genuine partners in learning
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Self Esteem Program
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Peer Mediators
  - PAL Program
  - Berry Street
- In rare instances, programs, incursions and excursions may be developed to address issue specific need or extreme behavioural situations (i.e. anger management programs)
- We optimise 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 any inappropriate or harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia or any other forms of discrimination or harassment that may affect students, staff or community members.*

### Targeted

- *Every year level – F – 6 - has a Team Leader/Coordinator, a Assistant Principal responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students that their Team is responsible for, and acts 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 and orderly learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait First Nations cultures – refer to our CUST policy for additional information*
- *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 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 our internal Student Wellbeing team members which include psychologist, speech therapist, music therapist Occupational Therapist, PSD coordinator and Welfare. Who can complete an educational needs assessment if one is required .*
- *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 will be promoted and social skills developed 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 our many 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

Pearcedale Primary School implements an extensive 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.
- Collaborating with students and their parent/carers to discuss how best to help a student engage with school.
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan, an IEP (individual Engagement Plan ) and/or a Behaviour Support Plan.
- Considering if any environmental adjustments need to be made, for example changing the classroom arrangement.
- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports through our in-house multi-disciplinary Wellbeing Team.
  - Student Support Services if our in-house team is overwhelmed.

- 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
- Emerson Specialist School for assistance or support if required.

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 a student and their family
- *Engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers*
- Convening 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**

Pearcedale Primary School is committed to providing the necessary program or environmental adjustments necessary 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 to enhance student wellbeing. Pearcedale 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 indicators.
- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and/or motivation.
- Attendance, detention and any suspension data.
- Engagement with families or agencies.
- 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 cooperatively, willingly and 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 rights of others to learn without harassment or interference of any kind..

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. Additional information about how to make a complaint is available in our Complaints Policy

## **6. Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and our Student Code of Conduct.

Violence, bullying or other offensive or harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behavioural standards of our school community, Pearcedale Primary School will initiate a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. If appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff in relation to their child/children.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class. By and large we try to reinforce positive behaviours as part of a learning experience, rather than focus on the elimination or modification of negative behaviours. This is the basis of our Self-Esteem program.

Disciplinary measures may need 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 always be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Warning and counselling a student that their behaviour was 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
- Change of class or environment to separate protagonists
- 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 Pearcedale 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.

## **7. Engaging with families**

Pearcedale Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and will strive to support families to engage appropriately and positively in their child's learning to help build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We aim to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- Ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures by making them 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 appropriate parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- Involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities where possible
- Involving families in school decision-making through appropriate School Council processes.
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and the development and monitoring of individual plans for students.

## **8. Evaluation**

Pearcedale Primary School will collect annual data to help understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the degree of success of our school-based strategies with a view to identifying emerging trends, issues or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey data
- case management data
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS referrals
- IRIS Alert data

Pearcedale 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 necessary intervention or adjustment 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

- 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 any suspensions or expulsions, as 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 the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and can be found on the [school’s website](#)

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	Feb 2023
Consultation	2023 SVC, SIT, Staff.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2024