

STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the office on 9366 2832.

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.

St Albans 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.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

St Albans Primary School opened in 1889 in a small cottage. The area is now part of the western suburbs and the school is located within a largely residential area approximately 18 kilometres west of the Melbourne GPO in the municipality of Brimbank.

The student population is currently 300 and is characterised by an SFO index of 0.74 with high LBOTE (including refugees), EMA and transience.

St Albans Primary School has a Campus of the Western English Language School operating five days a week, there are currently five classrooms.

The school community values education highly and is mutually supportive.

The school operates with composite classes except for two straight Prep classes. In addition to the principal, the school is staffed by 22 EFT Teachers, a Business Manager, ES staff who work as Learning Support and Multicultural Aides as well as Administration Support.

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

St Albans Primary School 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, responsibility, resilience and acceptance at every opportunity.

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 Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available on our website – www.stalbsps.vic.edu.au

3. Engagement strategies

St Albans 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.

At St Albans Primary School we provide a safe, supportive environment for all students to enable them to achieve success. The school's values of respect, resilience, acceptance and responsibility underpin all learning. Students are encouraged to reach their full potential and take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.

A summary of the whole of school, targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Whole school

- 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 including referring them to the school's Community Hub programs
- 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 St Albans Primary School use the Gradual Release instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons as outlined in the Teaching and Learning Handbook.

- teachers at St Albans 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 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
- 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 through the Positive Choices Program
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.
- Students are encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents through the Positive Choices Program
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Positive Choices Program
 - Respectful Relationships
- Counselling, anger management and social skill programs are organised to address issue specific behaviour
- 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

- the Assistant Principal, Leading Teacher and the PLT Leaders monitor the health and wellbeing of students in the school, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support through referral to the School Support Group and allied health workers
- 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 inclusive cultural practices
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor (usually the class teacher, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- the Assistant Principal and the Wellbeing Manager 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
- 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.
- 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](#) This support may include an IEP, counselling and a student support group.
- 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

- Student Support Groups, see: [Student Support Groups Policy](#)
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to Orange Door, SSSO network staff, DFFH
- Lookout

St Albans 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 Orange Door

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
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

St Albans Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The School Leadership team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. St Albans 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 and at transition programs
- attendance records
- academic performance
- attendance and suspension data
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- engagement with families
- referrals from the School Support Group and Western English Language School

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.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students 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, St Albans 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 action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Consequences 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. Consequences at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Consequences and restorative practices that may be applied are outlined in St Albans Primary School's Student Management policy.

- reminder about appropriate behaviour
- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- restorative discussion
- timeout from an activity, group or classroom

- referral to the PLT leader
- referral to school's leadership
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- lunchtime detentions
- in school and home suspension
- expulsion

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

- [Suspensions Policy](#)
- [Expulsions Policy](#)
- [Restraint and 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 St Albans 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

St Albans 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:

- Working with St Albans Primary School' Community Hub to deliver a range of parenting programs such as Growing Great Kids, Tuning into Kids, Multi-cultural Playgroup
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families in open afternoons/evenings and information sessions around the Australian Education system
- 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

St Albans 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
- behaviour logs
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

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 suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

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](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Yard Duty Supervision Policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2023
Consultation	School Council Staff
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2025