

# Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

*We are a Child Safe School and we will protect all children at all times.*

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## **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

Dunkeld Consolidated 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. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

## **POLICY**

### **1. School Profile**

Dunkeld Consolidated School is situated in the southernmost tip of the Grampians at the foot of the majestic Mount Sturgeon. Our school has expansive grounds including two ovals, an undercover games area with a synthetic surface, and three soft-fall play areas offering varied play-gym equipment in each. Our school shares a cricket/multi-purpose sport facility at the school. There is a large sandpit with various levels of concrete pipe offering mostly younger students the opportunity for creative play. The maintenance of our outdoor space is supported by an energetic Facilities Sub-Committee and is assisted by the Grampians Cricket Club, which is based at the school, and through supportive parent help, in particular well-attended working bees throughout the year.

Our indoor learning areas are spacious and modern. Currently our junior classes, Years Prep, 1 and 2 are located in the main building, with the upper teaching spaces in the BER and consist of a separate classroom for Year 6 while the Year 3, 4 and 5 classrooms have an opening, which allows for flexible working opportunities. All classrooms in the Upper Primary have modern soft furnishings for small breakout groups.

### **2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision**

Dunkeld Consolidated 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.

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 Philosophy Policy](#) is available online on the school's website.

Vision - Dunkeld Consolidated School has a caring environment with an emphasis being placed on students reaching their full academic, physical, personal wellbeing and social potential. The School links with community to provide a depth of extracurricular activities and leadership opportunities for students and encourages outstanding performances in the areas of leadership, academic achievement, sport, performing arts, cultural and artistic achievement.

Dunkeld Consolidated School aims to give students a solid foundation, with a strong emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy. The curriculum and instruction aims to assist children to develop their potential to the fullest in all aspects of their school life and be ready to progress in their future endeavours.

Dunkeld Consolidated School's mission is to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education.

### **3. Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies**

Dunkeld Consolidated School 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

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students, 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
- teachers at Dunkeld Consolidated School use an instructional model to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Dunkeld Consolidated 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
- 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 Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Wellbeing Coordinator and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, 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
  - Play is the Way
  - The Resilience Project
  - Student surveys
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

- 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 class has a teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their class, 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.
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy.
- 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

### Individual

Dunkeld Consolidated 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 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**

Dunkeld Consolidated 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. Dunkeld Consolidated School will use 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
- referral to Student Support Officers for Speech Assessment/Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Educational Psychology and Social Welfare support

## **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 and Management**

Dunkeld Consolidated School has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive and proactive and set out what are appropriate behaviours for our school community. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.

The values of Dunkeld Consolidated School Community, supported by the PITW social and emotional learning program, are demonstrated by the following shared expectations and behaviours:

### **EXCELLENCE**

- The classroom is a place where we actively participate and strive for personal best.
- The way we behave shows we are proud of our school, ourselves and our family.
- We strive for excellence and try our personal best in everything we do.

### **RESPECT**

- We treat others as we would like to be treated.
- We work, learn and play in an environment of mutual respect.
- We value individual and collective diversity.
- We play and work safely at all times.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

- We take responsibility for our own behaviour and understand the logical consequences that follow.
- We are responsible for our learning and the learning of others.
- We will endeavour to be self-motivated learners.
- We take care of our own and others personal property and space.

### **CARING**

- Care for self and others.

### **HONESTY**

- We will endeavour to be honest, sincere and seek the truth.

### **Student Expectations**

All students are expected to:

- respect, value and learn from the differences of others
- have high expectations that they can learn
- reflect on and learn from their own differences

### **Attendance**

All students are expected to come to school every day that the school is open to students. If students cannot come, they must provide an explanation from their parents/carers to their teacher. Students should arrive at each class on time and ready to learn.

## Behaviour

Students are expected to:

- support each other's learning by behaving in a way that is curious and respectful
- be considerate and supportive of others
- demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contributes to a positive school environment that is safe, inclusive and happy
- understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable
- be aware of the Bullying Policy

Behavioural expectations of students are also grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Philosophy/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 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, Dunkeld Consolidated 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 (123 MAGIC)
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- 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 Dunkeld Consolidated 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

Dunkeld Consolidated 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
- sharing behavioural expectations (i.e. PITW) with the school community

### 8. Evaluation

Dunkeld Consolidated 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

Dunkeld Consolidated 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
- 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](#)
- [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	May 2023
Consultation	Policy Sub-Committee, staff, School Council – June 2023. School community – ongoing consultation via offer of feedback on Child Safety Policies and Procedures as outlined on website.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2025