STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Rationale

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.

Wheelers Hill 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.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

1. Guidelines

1.1 School profile

Wheelers Hill Primary School provides a range of learning opportunities for all students and enjoys a well-founded reputation within the community as a socially conscious and caring school with a strong focus on excellence in achievement.

While catering for all ability levels and learning styles, our main focus is on students achieving the best possible learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. Our Inquiry units of work and our capacity to provide high quality specialist programs offer students the opportunity to experience success. A wide range of enrichment programs further support the school's broad curriculum.

We believe that all students can and will learn and grow in confidence and self-esteem as a result of becoming motivated, self-extending, independent, life-long learners; achieving mastery of the curriculum; acquiring decision making, problem solving and critical thinking skills; working together effectively as part of a team.

Wheelers Hill Primary School enjoys extremely strong community support. Parental involvement in students' education as well as in the maintenance of school facilities is a particular feature of the school. An active and supportive School Council works cohesively to help the school deliver quality learning opportunities for all students.

1.2 School values, philosophy and vision

1.2.1 Our Philosophy:
Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

1.2.2 Our Values:
Respect – Caring about ourselves, others and the environment around us

Responsibility – Being accountable for ourselves, to others and the world we live in
Resilience – Adapting and coping with everyday life by, taking risks, being independent and thinking positively
Acceptance – Accepting ourselves as we are and acknowledging and accepting differences in others
Honesty – Being truthful and fair in what we say and do

At every assembly, we recognise these values in our School Pledge:
I am proud of my school and Australia my home.
I will care for our belongings and the environment.
I will be honest and responsible.
I will show respect towards others and accept their differences.
These values will help me be a resilient member of my community.

1.2.3 Our Vision

Wheelers Hill Primary School's vision is to provide a safe, caring community that values quality education with high expectations for all – staff, students and parents.
To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.
Wheelers Hill Primary School works collaboratively with students and parents/ carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

1.2.4 Our Mission

Wheelers Hill Primary School's mission is to provide learning experiences which challenge, extend and motivate all students to reach their full potential intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically.
Wheelers Hill Primary School strives to attain excellent academic results by implementing a diverse curriculum catering for all students and providing programs that value differentiation.
Wheelers Hill Primary School's objective is to:

- Implement consistent whole school teaching and learning practices
- Provide an engaging and stimulating learning environment
- Achieve individual success through differentiated learning
- Respect all cultures and foster inclusiveness in a safe environment
- Value our role as educators and strive for continuous improvement
- Provide explicit instruction with clear learning intentions, success criteria and high expectations of all students.

2   Implementation

2.1 Engagement strategies

Wheelers Hill 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.
A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

2.1.1 Universal

- WHPS has follows the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework, which ensures consistency of behavioural expectations and behaviour management across the school.
- school – wide programs/frameworks operating at Wheelers Hill Primary School are:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - The Resilience Project (curriculum, incursions, parent and staff information sessions)
  - Circle Time
  - Restorative Practices
  - Individual Education Plans
  - Essential Learning Agreements
  - Student Voice and Agency
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- students are encouraged to recognise positive behaviour in their peers, through the weekly Values Award
- expected behaviours in all settings within the school are explicitly taught and acknowledged
- WHPS has high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- we prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- we have created and continue to develop a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- our school is welcoming to all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning
- we analyse and are responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, Parent Opinion Survey, Staff Opinion Survey, student behaviour data, student management data and school level assessment data (teacher judgement and diagnostic)
- all teachers at Wheelers Hill Primary School follow the WHPS Instructional Model to ensure an explicit, shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- the teachers at Wheelers Hill 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 is 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 developed carefully planned transition programs for students moving from Kinder to Prep, from Year 6 to Year 7 and for students moving between year levels, to support students as they move into different stages of their schooling
- the school monitors student attendance and implements 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 student voice opportunities as they arise. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- all students are welcome to self-refer to their class teacher, their Level Leaders, 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
- professional learning is made available to staff in a relevant and timely manner re: Trauma, Behaviour Management, School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support, Student Voice and Agency
- there are many opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, lunch time and after school clubs, choirs, bands etc.)
- students have the opportunity to participate in a range of programs that encourage cross-age relationships, such as the Buddy program and the Peer Mediation program.
- students develop an increased connection to the school via our School Pride and Sustainability programs.

2.1.2 Targeted

- the Assistant Principal for Wellbeing liaises closely with students and families who have additional wellbeing needs
- the school 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 apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Individual Learning Plans (academic) are developed each year for students who meet specific criteria
- EAL (English as an Additional Language) support is available to students who meet specific criteria
- MSL (Multi-Sensory Structured Language) Support is available to students who meet specific criteria
- Behaviour Support Plans and Wellbeing Plans are available to students who meet specific criteria
- Koorie students who attend WHPS 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
- culturally and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school through immersion in a highly multicultural school environment where all cultures and languages are accepted and acknowledged as being of equal value
- 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
- students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- 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

2.1.3 Individual
Wheelers Hill Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- termly Student Support Group (SSG) meetings for students on the PSD program
- developing an Individual Education Plan, Behaviour Support Plan or Wellbeing Plan
- SSG meetings as required for students on Wellbeing or Behaviour Support Plans
- SSG meetings as required for students requiring behaviour support, but do not meet criteria for a Behaviour Support Plan
- 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
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- engaging with Department programs and services such as Program for Students with Disabilities; Mental health toolkit; headspace; Navigator; LOOKOUT
- referring the student to:
    - school-based wellbeing supports
    - Student Support Services
    - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, Headspace, CYMHS, Orange Door or other allied health professionals
    - Re-engagement programs such as Avenues Education

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.
- ATSI students, students living in Out of Home Care and students on the PSD program automatically receive an Individual Education Plan, which is revised and modified over the duration of each year.

2.2   Identifying Students in Need of Support

Wheelers Hill Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. We 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, in particular Literacy and Numeracy assessments
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- behaviour data collected as part of the SWPBS program

- engagement with families
- school entry health questionnaire
- Student Support Group meetings
- Information and recommendations presented to the school by external health and mental health professionals, SSSOs or other relevant professionals or paraprofessionals

2.3   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.

2.4   Student Behavioural Expectations and Management

Wheelers Hill Primary School follows the School Wide Positive Behaviour framework.
SWPBS is a framework that brings together school communities to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures. When SWPBS is implemented well, teachers and students have more time to focus on relationships and classroom instruction. Students and staff benefit from:

- Increased respectful and positive behaviour
- Increased time focused on instruction
- Improved social-emotional well-being
- Positive and respectful relationships among students and staff
- Increased adoption of evidence-based instructional practices
- A predictable learning environment with improved perceptions of safety and increased attendance.

To support the implementation of SWPBS the school has developed a series of expectations and protocols which clearly communicate behavioural expectations, responses to appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and clear understandings of major and minor behaviours, to all members of the school community.

Find the WHPS SWPBS handbook in the Appendix:

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Example School's Bullying policy.

Wheelers Hill Primary School has developed a common understanding of what constitutes bullying. The 'Is It Bullying?' poster can be found in the SWPBS handbook in the Appendix.

Restorative Practices are used to resolve issues between students. Staff receive regular training in the use of Restorative Practices. The Restorative Practices script can be found in the SWPBS handbook in the Appendix.

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department of Education and Training 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 Wheelers Hill 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.

2.5 Engaging with Families

Wheelers Hill 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.

2.6 Evaluation

Wheelers Hill 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/behaviour data
- school reports
- parent survey
- resilient youth survey

- case management
- CASES21 including attendance data
- SOCS

Wheelers Hill Primary School will analyse behaviour data each term to understand the frequency and types of behavioural issues which are occurring in our school, so that we can identify emerging trends or needs and tailor our SWPBS program to target these behaviours. Expected behaviours will be explicitly taught to all students over the duration of each year, but targeted teaching as a more immediate response may occur in response to this data analysis.

3 Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:
- Included in the staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff meetings as required
- Referenced in our staff handbook
- Available publicly on our school website
- Included as an annual reference in the school newsletter

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](#)

4 Evaluation

4.1 The Education Sub-committee will review the effectiveness of the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy on a cyclic basis in accordance with DET Policy Framework and Guidelines.

5 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
- Yard Duty and Supervision Policy

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Leasyl Richards (Assistant Principal)		
Policy Area	Reviewed and Ratified by School Council	Next review
Student safety	June 2022	2024