



Wangaratta Primary School Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy

This policy was last updated in January 2020 in consultation with the Wellbeing KIST Team, and should be reviewed every 2 years.

Rationale

Purpose:

The purpose of the School Engagement and Inclusion Policy is to articulate the school community's shared expectations in the areas of student engagement, student values, student support and student behaviour. The policy supports the rights and outlines the expectations of every member of the school community. It engages in and promotes a safe and inclusive educational environment. Wangaratta Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and this will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Wangaratta Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Wangaratta Primary School has a responsibility to understand the importance and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all students and it is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

School Profile:

At Wangaratta Primary School we build close partnerships with all families and great connections with our community. With approximately 167 students from 130 families, the staff know our children well and use a range of strategies to maintain good communication with parents to ensure the best academic and wellbeing outcomes for every child. The team at Wangaratta Primary School comprises a Principal, 9 classroom teachers, Italian, Music, Art, STEM and PE specialists, 5 education support staff and 1 school chaplain. Together they form a high functioning Professional Learning Community that places the child at the centre, employs evidence-based teaching and learning strategies, and works constantly to improve practice. We have agreed principles of practice addressing academic, physical

and social and emotional learning needs, ensuring a differentiated and cohesive learning journey for every student from Foundation to Year 6.

We have wonderful learning facilities, with flexible learning spaces and buildings for all grades, combined with our beautiful heritage school building housing specialist learning including classrooms, Library, Visual Arts, Music, STEM and Italian rooms. Our unique geography further enhances the learning opportunities we provide. Located within the Wangaratta CBD, it is a short walk to the city library, gallery, Performing Arts Centre, parks and local businesses. Sited close to the junction of the Ovens and King Rivers we also have access to beautiful natural environments.

School Mission, Vision and Values:

Our Mission:

Keeping the children at the centre of what we do.

Our Vision:

Wangaratta Primary School is committed to developing creative thinkers with a curiosity to learn. We strive to personalise the learning for every child by developing their skills, passions and interests. This keeps the child at the centre of everything we do.

Our Values:

REACH - Respect, Engagement, Acceptance, Collaboration & High Expectations

Overview:

Children strongly engaged and connected to school are more successful academically and socially. They are also great contributors to a positive learning environment that benefits everyone at our school.

At Wangaratta Primary School we model and teach good social skills and work proactively to engage every child with school life. We rely on an active partnership with families to succeed with this. We use our School Wide Positive Behaviour System (SWPBS) Matrix to explicitly teach the desired values and behaviours that represent what WPS stands for.



<p>We build positive interactions and respectful relationships across our school community. We actively encourage behaviours that contribute to a positive school community, and quickly address negative and inappropriate behaviours.</p>	<p>We explicitly teach children social and emotional skills. Children learn these skills, just like learning English and Maths skills. Our aim is to develop in our students the ability to care for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations.</p>	<p>Our students are most successful when we work together with each child's family. We actively build parent-teacher relationships so as to strengthen a culture of mutual support. We keep families informed via face-to-face meetings, phone calls, Compass, emails, messaging and more.</p>	<p>Sometimes children have social, emotional, academic and/or behavioural difficulties that need further intervention. Where necessary we reach out to experts outside our school, and to health and community agencies to assist students' to improve their learning outcomes.</p>
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Guiding Principles:

- The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behavior management approach.
- The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behavior to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change.
- The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

Engagement Strategies:

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 groups or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

Wangaratta 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 behaviors which can negatively impact on the learning of self and others. The whole school, group-specific and individual engagement strategies used in our school are outlined in

Identify students in need of extra support:

Our school will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra support using the following strategies:

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Information from Individual Education Plans (IEP) and Student Support Groups (SSG)
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- Behaviour observed by classroom teachers as documented in Chronicles on Compass
- Attendance, Learning Tasks and Reporting tools
- Engagement with student families
- Access Student Support Services
- Access Student Support Officer
- Access to outside Professional Services
- Targeted, explicit teaching of expected/desired behaviour, incorporating individualised social and emotional stories

Shared Responsibility:

Wangaratta Primary School recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

All members of our school community have shared responsibility to build a safe and respectful school. There are behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the Principal, all staff, parents, students and visitors.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

Responding to challenging behaviour:

We focus on a proactive approach to managing and responding to challenging behaviours, building positive connections and a school environment to make behaving well and making good choices easier for every child. However, when mistakes, poor choices, and unacceptable behaviour do occur, they are quickly challenged and addressed using a staged response. See our 'Behaviour Management Flowchart' in SWPBS - 4 step process document.

When poor behaviour does occur we expect each child involved to:

1. **Own It-** What happened? What did you do? Who was affected? What were you thinking? What are you thinking now?
2. **Learn From It-** What could have you thought differently? What could you have done differently?
3. **Fix It-** What needs to be done to put things right? What should happen next?

Discipline:

Disciplinary measures may be used as a part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Reflection Room Process
- Restorative approach (e.g. repairing damage caused).
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specific period in a buddy classroom. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals.
- If a trend is found or behaviour is consistent, an individualised Behaviour Management Plan will be put into action.
- A Student Support Group meeting between classroom teacher, principal, parents/guardians, student and any external agencies, deemed necessary.
- Suspension (in-school or out of school).
- Expulsion.

Discipline will be applied in a way that's proportionate to the behaviour and upholds procedural fairness.

Bullying:

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by one person or a group towards others which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or cause discomfort.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is when a person, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion and where there is an imbalance of power.

Types of bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. Direct physical bullying

This form includes hitting, tripping, pushing or damaging property.

2. Direct verbal bullying

This includes name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

3. Indirect bullying

This is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation.

Indirect bullying includes

- Lying and spreading rumours
- Playing nasty jokes to humiliate
- Mimicking
- Encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- Damaging someone's social reputation

What bullying is not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

1. Mutual conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students and not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one sided way.

2. Social rejection or dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

3. Single-episode acts

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students.

Prevention:

Preventative approaches to classroom management may include-

- **Values Education**- the school wide focus on values education is a critical element in building an understanding within all students of their rights and responsibilities as members of our

community. Our whole school values of Respect, Engagement, Acceptance, Collaboration & high Expectations are explicitly taught to all students. These values continue to be reinforced throughout the school year. Through constant teacher modelling students see values in action, they learn to use the correct vocabulary, to understand their rights and to expect others to treat them reasonably and fairly. Students understand that they have a right to learn in a safe and secure environment. They know that they have a responsibility as a member of the grade to encourage others to act appropriately. They understand that the individual does not have the right to interfere with the learning of others. School is seen as a neutral zone where neighbourhood grievances are left at the gate.

- **Classroom Rules** - at the beginning of each year, a set of classroom rules are established. These plans/rules include the rights and responsibilities of all class members, rewards and consequences. These plans assume a group management approach whereby students and teachers have communal responsibility to manage classroom behaviour and the teacher is designated by the group to ensure that students right and responsibilities are upheld.
- **Relationship building**- staff constantly work towards building positive relationships with all students. It is through the building of positive relationships with the students, that staff are seen as being interested in and genuinely caring about the welfare of the students. Staff, are trusted by the students, and students on the whole like the staff and strive to please. Staff, treat students with respect, have clearly understood expectations for acceptable behaviour and ensure that they act as role models for the students.
- **Social skills programs/discussions**- programs such as Own It, Learn from It and Fix It (restorative conversations), Positive Based Schools Program and Calmer Classrooms are an integral part of the social skills program. These programs are used to develop the student's social skills and provide the students with strategies to manage their own behaviours. These social skills programs enable the students to understand and have empathy for others; give them positive ways to manage conflict rather than relying on aggression; and gives the students strategies to manage their own anger. The personal skills of resilience, persistence, organisation, and confidence are an integral part of the school program. The students learn the meaning of these concepts and are given the opportunity to practice these skills in a supportive environment where they are able to achieve success.
- **Student leadership roles**- beginning in Foundation, students are given supported opportunities to undertake leadership roles within the classroom and whole school. These student leaders are involved in decision making within the school. The leadership opportunities develop an understanding of democracy and giving the students experiences in being successful members of a democratic society. These student leadership roles include House Captains, School Captains, SRC, Peer Educators and many more.
- **Engaging and relevant curriculum**- curriculum is based on the Victorian Curriculum. The interests and experiences of the students is relevant to their world. It is important to cater for different learning styles whilst teaching the fundamental skills of literacy and numeracy. High but achievable expectations are established for all students. Supports and scaffolding are provided where necessary to enable the students to achieve their goals. By providing an engaging and relevant curriculum the trigger for misbehaviour is minimised.
- **Explicit instruction**- students are supported and encouraged to reach their full potential in all social, emotional and academic areas. Understanding where the students are at, what skills they have and what they need to progress onto the next level are integral to all teaching that

occurs. Teaching is explicit and focuses on small chunks of learning at any one time using Learning Intentions and Success Criteria as outlined by John Hattie. Scaffolding and supports are available for students to successfully progress from one level to the next. Instruction is given at the point of need of each student to ensure that work is achievable for all, whilst still challenging more competent students. This includes adapting the curriculum to suit individual students academic skills, the use of intervention programs and suitable use of ES Staff and small group work.

- **Reward systems**- these focus on, encouraging and praising positive behaviour through the use of verbal labelled praise. Stickers, free time, games and other class chosen rewards are examples of some rewards used. Both students and teachers can acknowledge and reward these correct behaviours. Star slips are handed out regularly to students who display our school values - respect, engagement, acceptance, collaboration and high expectations.
- **Celebrating successes**- successes are celebrated regularly in the classrooms, with families and with the whole school community through such things as Principal Awards, student of the week, compass positive observation notifications, star slips, phone calls or messages home to parents and special features in the school newsletter and local press.
- **Parental involvement**- parents are actively encouraged to become part of their child's education, to regularly visit the school and to assist in school programs. Parents are informed of repeated misbehaviours and expected to assist the school in supporting the management approaches used by the school.
- **Parental education**- At times, parenting programs are conducted by the school in conjunction with outside agencies to develop the positive parenting skills of the parents. This empowers the parents into understanding and use effective and consistent behaviour management methods at home. (Child First Referrals, SWPBS Matrix, newsletters)
- **Community involvement**- Community involvement such as Education Week, Carevan, OAK FM, Harmony Day events, ANZAC Day march, Choir and School Band commitments, Christopher Robin Kindergarten activities, Artists in residence, Count us in, Community garden and Tour de cure are areas which enables and encourages the outside community to become involved in the education of our students. These people build important relationships with the students both inside and outside the school. Students are involved in regular activities and volunteer on community programs such as tree planting, community garden work and the Stitched Up Festival and Wangaratta Jazz Festival. These important links with outside groups enable the students to develop a sense of belonging to the wider Wangaratta community.
- **Minimising situations**- all efforts are made to minimise situations where students are likely to misbehave. For example, if a classroom teacher is absent, a student who finds it difficult to relate to casual relief teachers will be relocated to another classroom for the day, thus minimising the stress triggers for the student and possible misbehaviour. CRT (casual relief teacher) folders are kept in the office and are given to casual staff to enable the smooth transition of daily organisation and routines.

Intervention:

Classroom Management Plans- these plans clearly establish the expected behaviours within the grade and the consequence for misbehaviour. The stages for managing misbehaviour are clearly defined and increase in severity for repeated misbehaviours. The stages include ignoring, nonverbal and verbal

hinting, verbal warning, redirecting the student's attention, moving the student to another position within the classroom, relocating the student to the proaches to student management are used when necessary to quickly and non-aggressively stop disruptive and unsafe behaviours. These approaches may include the following:

- classroom of a buddy teacher, after school detention and suspension.
- **Behavioural Management Plans**- in each class behavioural management plans are established when required. At the beginning of each school year a set of classroom rules are established which include through the use of established classroom rules. These plans include - the rights and responsibilities of all class members, rewards and consequences. The plans assume a group management approach whereby students and teachers have communal responsibility to manage classroom behaviour and the teacher is designated by the group to ensure that students right and responsibilities are upheld.(GET RID OF THIS AND MOVE TO CLASSROOM RULES) The plans include peer support where students support and encourage one another to manage their own behaviours.
- **Relocation of students**- repetitive misbehaviour results in the student being referred to the the reflection room during break times allowing the student to reflect on their behaviour. The student may also be placed in the classroom of a buddy teacher for a period of time ranging from the remainder of the session to 3 days. Once a child has been relocated for a full day, a class meeting is held before the child is permitted to return to the grade. This allows classmates to provide personal feedback on how the disruptive behaviour affects them and their work.
- **Formal discussions**- students who continually make poor choices regarding their behaviour attend an individual meeting with the teacher at a later time. During these discussions the student is expected to verbalise their misbehaviour and the reasons for it, the effect of the misbehaviour on others, and propose alternative more productive behaviours which could be displayed. Logical consequences and restorative practises are agreed to by both the teacher and student. The teacher then follows up to ensure that the restorative practises are undertaken.
- **Behaviour Management Flowchart or Matrix**- all student behaviour incidents are managed in accordance to our behaviour management flowchart.
- **Time out**- In the circumstance that a child warrants a Time Out as outlined in the Behaviour Management Flowchart, they will be removed from the yard for half of their break time to complete a restorative conference with a teacher and review their behaviour explicitly. These behaviours will be documented on Compass, approved by the Principal/Leading Teacher and forwarded to parents immediately.
- Reflection room process/procedure
- **A consistent approach**- consistency of approaches is a vital component of all classroom behaviour management. Students know what to expect, they know that fair and logical consequences will be applied to misbehaviour. Students feel empowered as they are encouraged to assert their right to learn without interruption. All students know that disruptive behaviours will not be tolerated.
- **Blue Card**- in situations where a child becomes a danger to other students or refuses to be relocated from the grade a blue card system is used. The blue card is sent to either the Principal/Leadership Team members and they come to the classroom and direct the student to leave the room in an assertive but non-aggressive way. If the child still refuses to leave the

room, then the other grade members are directed to leave the classroom with the teacher. This quickly and effectively removes threats of physical and verbal abuse and takes away the power of an audience from the misbehaving student. Once the situation has been defused and the student has calmed down, discussion will take place, logical consequences will be worked out and retribution will be planned for.

- In the case of extreme behaviour, a Code Black may need to be instigated at the school to ensure the safety of everyone.
- **Withdrawal Room** This could be buddy classroom or reflection room- when a student's behaviour is deemed to be unsafe or unacceptable then the student will be sent for time out in the withdrawal room/office area. The length of the time out will vary according to the severity of the behaviour and can range from half a session to extended periods of a week or more. A student will only be asked to stay in a withdrawal room for half of the given break and then referred to the yard duty teacher to complete their time out. Teachers staff the withdrawal room on a roster basis. Students are expected to sit quietly in the withdrawal room and calm down. Once calm they are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and suggest more appropriate actions for the future through the completion of a restorative reflection sheet appropriate to their developmental age.
- **Notifying Parents**- students are expected to take responsibility for their behaviours. A part of this responsibility is informing their parents of their actions. This can take the form of a student ringing their parent to tell them about their inappropriate behaviour, or writing a letter home. Teachers are expected to contact a parent to notify them of time-out or after school detention and the behaviours that caused it. Forcing the student to take responsibility for their behaviours is a very powerful deterrent with students. Teachers frequently contact parents to inform them of unacceptable student behaviours and to explain the consequences of these actions. Staff work with the parent in trying to establish an understanding of the reasons why unacceptable behaviours are occurring. Parents are expected to work with the school in minimising the factors which trigger unacceptable behaviours and to support the school in its decisions regarding consequences for misbehaviour.
- **Parental Meetings**- when repeated severe behaviour patterns occur, parents are expected to attend the school for a meeting, to work with and support the school in formulating effective and productive solutions to the student's misbehaviour. Parents are regularly informed about the effectiveness of approaches implemented.

Escalation of Student Behavioural Difficulties:

Wangaratta Primary School staff members are encouraged to involve the school's leadership team when required at any stage of intervention regarding student behaviour.

Suspension

The Principal may suspend a student if the student:

- A. Behaves in a manner that poses a danger to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person
- B. Commits an act of significant violence or causes significant damage or destruction to property, or is knowingly involved in the theft of property

- C. Processes, uses or deliberately assists others to use prohibited drugs or substances
- D. Fails to comply with any reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a Principal, teacher, support staff member or other adult
- E. Consistently behaves in a manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student or students
- F. Consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person

If a student is suspended, it will be for the shortest time necessary. The aim of the suspension is to provide an opportunity for the student, their parent/s or carers and the school's staff to reflect on the present difficulties and develop positive, student-focused engagement strategies. At any time during a suspension, parents/carers can request that a student support group meeting be convened.

In-school Suspensions

An in-school suspension can have a number of positive outcomes for the school and the student:

- The suspended students and the rest of the class can continue work, with disruption minimised
- Time can be allocated for individualised student support, and support of their parents/carers (if appropriate)
- It allows out-of-school suspension to be used for the most extreme behavioural issues

Expulsion

The School Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school according to the procedures set out below. Permanent expulsion from a school is the most extreme sanction open to a Principal. Except in the most unusual and extreme circumstances, it will only be used after other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in this policy have been exhausted.

The Principal can expel a student if, whilst attending school or directly travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travel organised by the school:

- The student's behaviour is of such magnitude that when comparing the student's educational needs with the need to maintain the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff and students and the effectiveness of the school's educational programs, an expulsion is the only available mechanism.

Corporal punishment is NOT used in the school.

Engaging with Families

Our school values parent/carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and seeks feedback through the parent opinion survey, Compass, Parent and Friends group, regular conversations with parents and from parent representatives on School Council. The School Council and Parents and Friends group provides financial assistance and works hard to build a sense of community.

Our school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.

The school will create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the schools Student Engagement and Inclusion policy
- Conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- Providing volunteer opportunities to enable parent/carers and students to contribute
- Involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- Inviting families to weekly assemblies and to participate in special events
- Involving families as participants in decision-making
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- Involving families in Individual Education Plans (IEP's) and Student Support Groups (SSG's) and BMP's.

Furthermore, parents are expected to act in a respectful and constructive manner when dealing with our school. More detail on parent responsibilities and consequences for inappropriate behaviour are outlined in our statement of values.

Evaluation

Data collection analysis

Data will be collected regarding frequency and type of wellbeing issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school based strategies and approaches.

Some sources of data are:

- The Attitudes to School Survey data
- School level report data
- Parent survey data
- Student survey data
- Data from case management work with students'
- Data extracted from software such as CASES21 or Compass.

Responding to the needs of all students:

Wangaratta Primary School is committed to providing a highly engaging and effective learning environment for all students. Whilst many students will be adequately catered for within the 'normal' classroom environment and curriculum, we acknowledge that many students have additional needs, either for support or extension. Our school is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of these students through coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies.

Attendance:

Whilst student attendance at school is a legal obligation of parents/carers, staff members at Wangaratta Primary School are committed to providing active support for full student attendance by:

- Setting and communicating high expectations for attendance to all members of the school community.
- Questioning student absences promptly and consistently. Compass automatically e-mailing service messages to confirm absences daily.
- Creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning.
- Providing early identification of and immediate supportive intervention for students at risk of non-attendance. (Attendance Plan)

Expectations for attendance – Parents

Parents/carers are required to:

- Ensure that their child is on time for school each day.
- Notify the school of their child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of the child's absence (either on Compass via phone/email/text or a written note.)
- Notify the school in advance of planned absences (either via phone/email, Compass or a written note.)
- Ensure that all contact details are correct and up to date.

Guidelines:

This policy is based upon the following documents, programs and resources:

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)

Victorian Curriculum

Wangaratta Primary School Strategic Plan

Teacher reference materials

Visible Learning : A synthesis of 800+ meta-analyses on achievement- John Hattie 2009

This policy is informed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx>

Aims

