

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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.

Irymple 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Irymple Primary School is committed to creating a learning environment that supports each child to 'be the best that they can be'. Our school has four key values - Learning, Pride, Respect, and Safety.

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The school is continually striving to improve the level of student learning in all curriculum areas through the delivery of high-quality learning programs with an emphasis in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The individual needs of all students are catered for through a range of programs providing additional support and extension.

Our school culture promotes the social and emotional development of our students through the explicit teaching and reinforcement of the school values of 'Pride, Respect, Safety and Learning'.

We are proud of our school and the relationship it enjoys with its families and the wider community. Families recognise and value that our children are motivated to attend, enjoy their learning, and have a strong connection to the school. They recognize the effectiveness of programs in developing a range of valuable social skills for students. Families are involved in the school in many ways, including the School Council, Parents' Club, support of learning within classrooms, sharing in activities, excursions, social activities, and celebrations.

2. School values, philosophy, and vision

Irymple Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff, and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values Pride, Respect, Safety and Learning.

Our school vision is to be the best that we can be, whilst our mission is to create a stimulating learning environment where each student can achieve their personal best academically and socially. We are committed to increasing participation in 'learning and play' of all our students. We aim to provide an inclusive and supportive setting which is ever responsive to students' backgrounds, interest, experiences, knowledge, and skills.

Our Statement of Values is available on our school website.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Irymple Primary 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:

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Universal (All students)

- positive classroom management strategies - following the process and the continuum
- 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
- 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
- deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students can choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths, and aspirations.
- teachers at Irymple Primary School use Respectful Relationships and the Berry Street Educational Model. These frameworks ensure an explicit, common, and shared model of instruction that is evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- teachers at Irymple 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.
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort, and individual level.
- students can 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, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through book week activities, athletics, music programs and peer support programs.

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- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Year Group 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. Posters are visible that advertise this.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - o Respectful Relationships
 - o Bully Stoppers
 - o The Berry Street Educational Model
 - o The Resilience Project
- programs, incursions, and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs, online use)
- 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.
- Student Voice Teams with specific foci running each term

Targeted

- each year group has a Year Group Leader/Coordinator responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support.
- Grade 6 Leadership program that is undertaken weekly
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive and culturally safe 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.
- Learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background are supported through SSS Services with the Department of Education.
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+. The school follows the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#) including the facilitation of activities and measures established to foster inclusion and diversity.
- 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.

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- 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.
- 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:
 - o [Student Support Groups: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](#)
- Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Disability Inclusions Program
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to Child First, Headspace, Orange Door and other local support organisations
- LOOKOUT Education Support Centres

Irymple 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 Education Plan/ Behaviour Support Plan or Safety Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up.
- referring the student to:
 - o school-based wellbeing supports.
 - o Student Support Services
 - o Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child, and adolescent mental health services or Child First
 - o Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

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- 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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESO)
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Irymple Primary 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. Irymple Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social, or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled.
- attendance records
- academic performance
- 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

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.

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- 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

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families 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, Irymple 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 disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores, and implements 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.
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour.
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices

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- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- behaviour plans e.g. Prevent, Teach, Reinforce Model
- suspension
- expulsion
- Please note that we follow our Positive Classroom Management Structure

Suspension and 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 Irymple 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

Irymple 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.

8. Evaluation

Irymple 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.

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

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

Irymple Primary School will 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.

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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/carers 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:

- Attendance 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	Updated 20/5/2026
Consultation	Consulted with school Council - May 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2028

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