

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact  
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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.

Brandon Park 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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# 1 School Profile

Brandon Park Primary School is located in Wheelers Hill, in the southeast of Melbourne. Its current population is 582 students. The school population is very multi-cultural with students from over 40 cultural backgrounds. 31% of our families are of Chinese background, 22.9% of Australian background and 11.5% of Indian background, and this is something we celebrate.

There are 28 straight classes from Foundation to Year Six. The specialist programs that Brandon Park Primary School offers are Visual Art, Music, Physical Education, Science and Mandarin.

In late 2022 the Government-funded gymnasium, music room, canteen and staff conference room were completed and opened. A local basketball club uses the facility to train during the week as well as karate classes. The Helen O'Grady Drama School also uses school facilities for weekly drama lessons. Camp Australia before and after school care runs daily and also provides a holiday program for families. Currently there is a large oval, a nature-based play area and middle school play equipment, along with four square courts and basketball rings for students to use during recess and lunch breaks.

Brandon Park Primary School is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) Link School that uses rigorous evidence-based scientific research to provide all students with teaching and learning experiences of the highest quality. PLC is a whole-school approach that involves collaboration, sharing and ongoing critical interrogation of teaching and learning. The use of rigorous learning cycles, analysing data and collaborative discussions and planning, ensure that the requirements of the curriculum are met and promote the growth of every student and teacher.

Our curriculum is high quality, broad and inclusive. We apply the principles of Explicit Direct Instruction to all teaching and learning areas and use an array of teaching strategies that support intellectual engagement, connectedness to the wider world, supportive classroom environments and the recognition and valuing of differences is embedded within our culture.

At Brandon Park Primary School the response to intervention model is applied to capture students who do not progress with tier one instruction. Either targeted small group instruction is provided by the classroom teacher and in some cases, students attend targeted intervention sessions in small groups, or as individuals with a member of the intervention team. Several of our students attend weekly session with the Speech and Language Pathologist if they require specialist attention. All students are monitored and a rigorous process of identifying students in need is done through the PLC enquiry cycle. Our literacy intervention program supports our school's firm belief that all children must be literate individuals by the time they leave primary school.

Camps are offered each year to students in Years Three to Six, and each year level incorporates incursions and excursions regularly across the year to link real life experiences and the learning. A variety of lunchtime clubs are on offer including art club, sports games, music activities, mandarin activities along with Lego club and chess are offered.

The lunchtime clubs are a great opportunity for children to engage in extra curricula activities outside of the classroom. They allow the children to engage with friends, new children from other classes, teachers and learn new skills. The clubs are run by staff and our Year Six student leaders and are open to all children at different stages over the school year.

The response to invention model is also applied across the Wellbeing space. Whilst the tier one instruction that is delivered through the dovetailing of the Respectful Relationships Program and The Resilience Project is very effective, a recent partnership with Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Uniting Victoria and Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) has provided a pathway of support for some of our students and families. The Family Wellbeing practitioner has provided support for parents, collaborated with teachers to run a small group targeted social skills program that included parents and become a referral point for families to access NDIS, Centrelink and the Orange Door.

Our student leadership program is powered by the belief that students have the power to affect change and create a positive culture. At the classroom level, all students contribute to the creation of classroom norms. Various opportunities are provided to students to collaborate with teachers to ensure that their ideas are acknowledged. The SRC is an example of the very effective student lead initiatives that raise awareness of different charities or programs such as Beyond Blue and Anti-Bullying Day. The Green team/sustainability group raise awareness of the meaning of 'custodianship' by organising Clean Up Australia Day, maintaining the vegetable garden and the 'trash trophy'. The student leadership group run weekly assemblies and have great respect and understanding of the importance of the weekly community event. The school week closes as we gather as a community on Bunurong land, recite the school oath and celebrate individual students' achievements. Student leaders play a pivotal role in many community events such as Foundation Family fun night, Harmony Day, ANZAC Day, and the BPPS Picnic Day.

Brandon Park Primary School acknowledges the important role parents and carers play in the education of their children. Parents and carers are encouraged to attend assemblies and community events such as school council and working bees. Helping in the classroom is encouraged and the re-introduction of classroom representatives is an exciting initiative.

## 2 School values, philosophy and vision

Brandon Park 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 of honesty, respect, excellence, resilience, sustainability and perseverance at every opportunity.

Our Brandon Park Values are important to us. We are supportive of one another and treat others with kindness and care. Our student devised definitions of our values are as follows;

- Honesty -We tell the truth even when it is hard to do.
- Respect - We treat people and property with care and kindness.
- Excellence - We raise the bar and always do our best.

- Resilience - We bounce back even when things are difficult.
- Sustainability - We care for the environment to make the world a better place.
- Perseverance - We keep trying even when things are challenging.

These values give emphasis to the cooperative and caring nature of the school's ethos and promote recognition of a positive and persistent attitude with a strong sense of responsibility and respect. We embed these student-written values into everyday life at Brandon Park and expect all members of the school community to uphold them.

Brandon Park Primary School is an inclusive and collaborative learning environment for students, staff and families and excels as a Professional Learning Community. Our vision is to continue the ongoing transformation of our school by providing an exemplary and well-rounded education for all students. Brandon Park Primary School employs a comprehensive and engaging curriculum based on the Science of Learning. We ensure that wellbeing and building community engagement are priorities. Our mission is to ensure that our excellent teaching and learning leads to engaged and motivated students, an increase in wellbeing, and improvement in student outcomes.

### 3 Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

We consider student wellbeing to be central to successful learning outcomes across the school. Brandon Park 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:

#### Universal

- 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
- teachers at Brandon Park Primary School use an Explicit Direct Instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Brandon Park 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 have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Wellbeing Assistant Principal, 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
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - The Resilience Project
  - The Zones of Regulation
- ESmart
- 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 year group has a PLC Leader, a senior teacher 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
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- our English as a second language students are supported and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background.
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Students

- 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
- 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

Brandon Park Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement.

These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services
  - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or 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 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.

## 4 Identifying students in need of support

Brandon Park 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. Example 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, 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

Brandon Park Primary School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

Brandon Park Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that models and encourages behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect. Brandon Park Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address behaviour. At our school we have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing. We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that promote positive behaviour.

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in Brandon Park Primary 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 school's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Brandon Park Primary 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.

At Brandon Park Primary School student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required.

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices when dealing with students' misdemeanours.



Restorative Practices:

- Are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness
- Promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy.
- Involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution.
- Promote relationship management rather than behaviour management.
- Separate the deed from the doer.
- Are concerned with establishing relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied.

Other disciplinary measures that may be applied include (depending on behaviour):

- 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 PLC Leader
- 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 Example 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

Brandon Park 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

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- 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

Brandon Park 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 data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Brandon Park Primary 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 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	February 2023
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Endorsed on	20/3/2023
Next scheduled review date	February 2025