



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Cheltenham Primary on **03 8585 3200** or cheltenham.ps@education.vic.gov.au

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.

Cheltenham 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 of *Kindness, Respect and Responsibility*.

Scope

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

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Policy

1. School profile

Cheltenham Primary School is situated in the bayside suburb of Cheltenham, 15km south-east of the Melbourne CBD. Our historic school attracts many families in and outside the area due to the range of challenging and engaging programs we offer our children from Foundation to Year 6.

There are currently about 410 students at the school, ranging in age from 5 years old (Foundation) to 12 years old (Year 6), with an average class size of 20 students.

Class composition is guided by the needs of our students with straight and multi-age options considered; enabling children to develop at a rate that suits their capabilities and to learn from their peers. Our school employs specialist staff in areas such as STEAM, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education, German, Kitchen Classroom, Library, Intervention (Literacy and Numeracy).

We focus on the development of the whole child: academically, physically, socially, and emotionally.

We embrace the involvement of families in a range of school programs and activities. The school has very strong partnerships with businesses and organisations within the local community. We are proud of our strong community links.

Cheltenham Primary School is fortunate to have several unique aspects to our school, including a kitchen classroom and garden and a designated sanctuary. We also have a strong commitment to developing responsible and ethical users of technology. The school maintains an innovative and strong digital technologies infrastructure and employs an IT officer for daily technical support.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Cheltenham Primary School's vision is ***'Supported We Achieve. Challenged We Grow.'***

Our mission is for each child to **'Accept the Challenge'** in learning for them – academically, socially and emotionally, and physically as they learn and live our school's core values.

Our school's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* is integral to our philosophy, approaches to learning and is the foundation of our school culture. Student's, staff, and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of Kindness, Respect and Responsibility at every opportunity.

Kindness	Respect	Responsibility
We model and demonstrate kindness, and take every opportunity to help others that may be in need.	We respect ourselves, our school and each other, and understand that our attitudes and behaviours have an impact on the people around us.	We accept responsibility individually and collectively, and take responsibility for our actions.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Cheltenham 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 connection and peer support in helping children and students to 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 school), targeted (cohort specific) and individual engagement strategies enacted by our school is included below:

Universal

- high, consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- building 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 and caregivers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and responsively acting on a range of school data such as: attendance; student attitudes to school survey; parent opinion survey; student management data and school performance data
- teachers at Cheltenham Primary School use a STEAM instructional framework aligned with a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum in English and Mathematics, to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidence-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Cheltenham 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 a foundation of our school
- carefully planned transition programs to support students transitioning into different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom and specialist learning areas, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents and caregivers monitoring student attendance and implementing attendance improvement strategies at a whole school, cohort, and individual level
- students contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through Student Representative Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their classroom teacher, PLC Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have questions or concerns
- opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school performances, athletics, music programs, buddy and peer support programs, collaborative STEAM projects
- all students are welcome to self-refer to their classroom teacher, PLC Leader, First Aide Officer, 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 approaches such as:
 - Resilience Program (F-6)
 - Social Stencil (F-6)
 - Zones of Regulation (F-2)
 - Growth Mindset (F-2)
 - Mindfulness (F-2)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, lunchtime clubs, lunchtime activities facilitated by Play Leaders)
- programs, incursions, and excursions developed to address specific needs or behaviours
- 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 level cohort has a PLC Leader, who monitors the academic growth, and wellbeing of students in the cohort, and acts as a point of contact for students who may require additional support
- programs provided for more targeted social/emotional support e.g., Lego Therapy, Social Thinking and Friends for Life
- Aboriginal 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 (EASL) students are supported to engage with their learning 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 a refugee background
- 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 Education Plan and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to fully engage in their learning and school activities in accordance the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to curriculum, access to learning programs, consultations with families where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- staff undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- 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](#)
- staff apply a trauma-informed approach to students that have experienced trauma.

Individual

Cheltenham Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students who are at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with the student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing [Individual Education Plans](#), [Behaviour Support Plans](#), Safety Plans
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom setup
- Referring the student to:
 - Student Wellbeing Officer
 - [Student Support Services](#)
 - [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Appropriate external supports such as council-based Youth and Family Services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, child, adolescent mental health services of Child First.
 - [LOOKOUT](#)

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 students 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 Regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- facilitating 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

Cheltenham Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing Officer and PLC Leaders play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance wellbeing.

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

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

- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness, and motivation
- in school and out of school 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
- 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, education support officers 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 are grounded in our School's *Statement of Values* and *Student Code of Conduct*

Violence, bullying and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with Cheltenham Primary School's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behavioural standards of our school, Cheltenham 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.

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 a PLC Leader
- restorative practices
- behaviour support plans 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 Cheltenham Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Cheltenham 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 families can engage in 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

Cheltenham 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 data
- CASES21
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school 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/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](#) on our website are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

Policy review and approval

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Consultation	Student Representative Council: May, 2023 Staff: May, 2023 Parents and Carers: April, 2023 School Council: April, 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2025