



Syndal South Primary School

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Syndal South Primary School on 9802 5277.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Syndal South 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 in a positive school culture. Student participation is encouraged and valued, helping 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.

CONTENTS

- School Profile
- School Values, Philosophy and Vision
- Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies
- Identifying Students in need of Support
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Behavioural Expectations and Management
- Engaging with Families
- Evaluation

POLICY

School Profile

Syndal South Primary School aims to develop students who are risk takers and independent learners, taking action and using their learning to support each other and making a difference in the local and wider community. We aim to develop students who are nurturing and socially competent individuals able to use their skills to contribute to society and encouraged to have pride in their school. Building student leaders who are confident and cooperative and lead by example is a vital role of the school. We aim to fully develop the academic, social, and personal potential of all our students.

Syndal South Primary School is nestled in an attractive residential area of Mount Waverley, 15 kilometres south east of Melbourne. The surrounding natural environment provides exciting learning



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opportunities for students. The school motto 'TOGETHER TOWARDS TOMORROW' along with a school vision enables all in the school community to focus on improving educational opportunities and facilities and developing students who are truly lifelong learners.

Syndal South Primary School has a current student population of 323. The students, staff, parents, and the wider community maintain a community spirit where staff, children and parents work together with a clear sense of purpose to develop self-esteem, tolerance and respect for others. By developing a safe, caring, and friendly environment, we work to celebrate success and build on student learning at every opportunity. We aim to build on student connectedness to each other, staff and those within the community. The school has a valued place in the local community and the facilities are used by many groups after hours. The fortnightly newsletter is distributed to all families electronically via Compass and the school website and social media are regularly updated with all the latest school activities, achievements and events featured.

A priority of the school is to provide a balanced, inclusive and developmental curriculum meeting children's academic, social and emotional needs. With a strong Pre-school to Foundation Transition program running over two terms the school offers an environment that eases the transition process for all students. The school offers programs using the Victorian Curriculum. Classroom programs are enriched with specialist programs including Japanese, Music, Physical Education, Science and Visual Arts. There are small group programs provided for students requiring support or extension as well as the provision of Individual Education Plans.

Acknowledging the diversity of learning styles, interests and talents, the school provides a wide range of enrichment opportunities including: swimming, sporting clinics, interschool sport, aerobics, perceptual motor program, camping program, instrumental music, choir, bi-annual school concert, curriculum based incursions/excursions, Buddies program, Life Education, School Representative Council, library, Solar Car, Solar Boat, Lunchtime activities that include: Garden, Japanese, Science, Music and Art Clubs.

Our school is well supported by an enthusiastic community and an active School Council and committees: Education, Finance, Fundraising, and Parents Association.

School Values, Philosophy and Vision

Syndal South 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 respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

The values which underpin the actions of the whole school community are:

- Respect
- Resilience
- Responsibility
- Care



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Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Syndal South 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 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 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 based upon the School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework
- Each year begins with a two week unit of work with an emphasis on building relationships, ensuring that all students participate in the development of classroom behaviour expectations
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Create a culture that is inclusive, engaging, and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- Welcome all parents/carers and be responsive to them as partners in learning
- Analyse and be 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
- Teachers at Syndal South School will develop and use an 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 Syndal South 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 at school assemblies and in 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.



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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 through curriculum celebrations, concerts, Year 5 Buddy Program, school plays, athletics and music.
- All students are welcome to be referred to the School Nurse, Year Level Coordinators, 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
- Engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Restorative Justice
 - Safe Schools
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Camping program - Year 2 stay late, Year 3 to 6 camp 3 days
- Parents Association activities promoting community engagement.
- 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 Year Coordinator who is responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students will be 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.
- English As an Additional Language students are supported through the EAL program. All cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- Support the learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from a refugee background
- Support a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ+ Student Support <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy>
- All students in Out of Home Care will be supported in accordance with the Departments' policy on Supporting Students in Out of Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Students with a disability are supported 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



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- Staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data
- Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Student's enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy.

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see:
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Referral to Student Support Services
- Referral to Child First, Headspace
- Options Capacity Building

Syndal South 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 and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- Consider 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 support such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First.



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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 with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are Supporting the student
- Monitoring individual student attendance and developing Attendance Improvement Plans
- 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.

Identifying Students in Need of Support

Syndal South is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally, physically and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Syndal South 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.

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, and members of the school community



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- 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.

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 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, Syndal South will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. 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. Consequences at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Consequences that may be applied include:

- Warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- Teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student to another spot within the classroom, or to another classroom whilst also considering other reasonable and proportionate responses to the misbehaviour.
- Referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- Restorative practices conversation
- Behaviour reviews and intervention meetings
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions 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.



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The Principal of Syndal South is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, with a link to the Department's [Restraint and Seclusion Policy](#)

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

Engaging with Families

Syndal South values the input of parents and carers, and 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.

Evaluation

Syndal South will collect data each year as part of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students. This 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 of major events
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Syndal South will also regularly monitor Compass 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 all staff induction processes
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy form school administration upon request



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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 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	May 2023
Consultation	via the school newsletter School Council 23 rd May 2023
Endorsed by	Principal
Next review date	May 2025