Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Eltham East Primary School

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact School Office 9439 9793

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.

Eltham East 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 values 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.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

1. School profile

EEPS is situated in the heart of Eltham, which is located in a treed semi-rural setting, 22km from Melbourne. To ensure all 670 students have a high-quality education a staff of over 50 works collaboratively towards achieving the school's vision. We have 40 equivalent full-time staff: 3 Principal class, 40 teachers and Education Support staff working with our students. Our curriculum emphasis is on literacy and numeracy and embraces rich, diverse, inclusive and engaging programs in the arts, science, humanities, health, physical education and Japanese. A strong co-curriculum is taught to build positive behaviours and interpersonal relationships. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard, desktop/notebook computers and access to i-Pads.

EEPS is about our students: their learning, their welfare and their potential. Our school vision is clearly committed to providing a safe, nurturing and caring environment which supports and inspires our children to value learning and grow in self-awareness and social responsibility. The treed and sloping site provides plenty of playing area for students. The buildings, classrooms and OSHC facilities have been designed over the past 10 years to resource and support these commitments with planning for ongoing improvements.

0ur motto of Learning and Growing Together and strong value system underpins our behaviour: the school and the community form an interdependent partnership. By implementing a range of innovative approaches as well as proven teaching practices we strive to continuously improve our provision of the very best learning environment for each and every child.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

School Values

We actively model, teach and use our school values of Respect, Teamwork, Learning, Resilience and Enjoyment.

Enjoyment: Thinking positively, choosing to act in a safe and friendly way to have fun and not spoil others fun

Teamwork: Is demonstrated when team members share the work, include everyone, contribute, take turns and act patiently

Respect: To be considerate and caring towards yourself, others and the environment

Resilience: being able to bounce back and recover from everyday difficulties and challenges, thinking optimistically and being able to build positive relationships

Learning: Is demonstrated by trying hard and doing your best. Students use their time productively and set goals for future progress

The school community has identified five learning dispositions to complement the school values:

- I persist with my learning even when it's difficult
- I am confident to try new things and I am comfortable making mistakes
- I always want to improve as a learner
- I am organised and use my time wisely
- I am a creative, inquisitive and critical thinker

Philosophy

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. All members of the Eltham East School community are committed to providing a safe environment for all.

Equal Opportunity

The Equal opportunity Act 1995 sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

Under the Act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:

- Age
- Breastfeeding
- Gender identity
- Impairment
- Industrial activity
- Marital status
- Lawful sexual activity
- Parental status or status as carer
- Physical features
- Political belief of activity
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religious belief or activity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes

All DET employees must act compatibly with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions.

- *The right not to be discriminated against*
- *The right to privacy and reputation*
- *The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief*
- *Cultural rights*

At EEPS we:

- *Encourage compliance with the Charter*
- *Support others to act compatibly with the Charter*
- *Respect and promote human rights*

Our statement of values is located on the EEPS Website.

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Eltham East Primary School uses a range of evidence-based strategies to positively engage all students in an inclusive and safe environment, learning, positive behaviour and respectful relationships are promoted for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping 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. We employ processes and strategies to intervene early when problems arise. Some of the engagement strategies employed are outlined below.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

At Eltham East Primary School **universal** (school-wide) engagement strategies are used and reviewed as part of our Annual Implementation Plan to create a safe, inclusive and empowering environment that fosters an enthusiasm for learning and supports student wellbeing. These include:

The text below is included as a sample only:

- *High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *Start-Up Program - prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing. This program creates a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued*
- *Parent Helpers Course - 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*
- *COMPASS portal is used to analyse and respond to student attendance data*
- *Delivering a broad curriculum including that student are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations. Rich programs in the arts, sports and global connections*
- *Teachers at Eltham East Primary School use an AIM 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 Eltham East 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*
- *Transition programs are carefully planned 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*

- *Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, PLC coordinators and Leadership team, whenever they have any questions or concerns*
- *Weekly lunchtime activities (i.e. sports teams, clubs, arts, ICT, library lunchtime activities)*
- *Opportunities for cross age activities — extended learning opportunities (ELO's) and buddy program*
- *We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning and all are encouraged to drop by with ideas, concerns and initiatives*
- *We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
  - *Respectful Relationships*
  - *Safe Schools eSMART*
  - *Be You (formerly Kids Matter)*
  - *CORE*
  - *Resilience Project*
  - *Public Speaking Program*
- *Programs, incursions and excursions are developed/accessed as required to address specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)*
- *Sporting events and programs – House sports and Interschool sport, athletics, swimming carnivals*
- *Whole school performing - concert*
- *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 and harassment*

Targeted

At Eltham East Primary School **targeted** (population-specific) engagement strategies are used that meet the varied needs of vulnerable cohorts, including both prevention and intervention strategies. *Examples include:*

- *Whole school approach to welfare communicated and documented in meeting proformas*
- *PLC teams at each year level have designated teacher responsible to monitor student health and wellbeing and a clear line of communication to ensure welfare issues are discussed and responded to, they act as appoint of contact for students who require additional support*
- *Special educational activities Smarter Internet Day, Digital Licence, National Day of Action Against Bullying*
- *Cultural Days – Harmony Day, Japanese Day*
- *Digital technologies- coding*
- *Cybersafety Programs, Parent, Teacher and Student Forums*
- *Social Emotional Learning activities (CORE, Bounce Back, You Can Do It, Respectful Relationships, Resilience Project)*
- *Reading Recovery*
- *Enrichment – Science Talent Search, Maths Olympiad*
- *Arts: Percussion ensemble, talent searches*
- *Prep and Year 5 Buddies*
- *Act for Kids in year 1*

- *Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO), Multiple Intelligence Program (MIP), STEAM*
- *Student Leadership Program – authentic responsibilities which includes student led assembly, events and lunchtime activities*
- *Use of COMPASS data to track student attendance, health records and school reports*
- *Use of SPA data to track student growth*
- *Goal setting and 3-way conferences*

EEPS staff receive training to ensure that as the need arises they are able to ensure:

- *Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture*
- *English as a second language students are supported through EAL program. All cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included*
- *The learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds will also be under this wellbeing Philosophy and engagement strategies*
- *We provide a positive and respectful learning for students who identify a LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ+ student support*
- *All students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on supporting students in Out of Home Care 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, students support groups and individual learning 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*

Individual

At Eltham East Primary School **individual** (student-specific) engagement strategies for students at risk, including strategies to identify and respond to individual student circumstances. These may include:

- *Student Support Groups*
- *Individual Education Plans*
- *Behaviour - Students*
- *Behaviour Support Plans*
- *Student Support Services*

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- Program for Students with Disabilities
- *Mental health toolkit*
- *headspace*

- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Eltham East 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*
- *Goal setting at 3-way conferences*
- *Targeted collegiate time observations for individual student needs*
- *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, Orange Door, CYMHS*
    - *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 Koorie Education 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

Eltham East Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Leadership team and PLC wellbeing representative/team leaders plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Eltham East 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*
- *Welfare as an agenda item for all meetings to ensure all staff are informed and proactive in student wellbeing support strategies and processes*

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

At Eltham East Primary School there are a number of programs to proactively teach our school values, as outlined in this policy. However, from time to time children make mistakes and may behave in a way that is unsafe or unfriendly. It is important to have a consistent approach to help children become responsible for their behaviour. Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/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 this policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

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

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Eltham East Primary School will institute this staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. 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

Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

These measures may be implemented 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*
- *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 Eltham East Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

STAGE ONE AND TWO: INITIAL ACTIONS - TEACHER

ONE: When a minor misbehaviour occurs a child receives a warning. A warning could be verbal or the child's name recorded on the board. A mark will be recorded against the name if the behaviour continues. TWO: The child may also be moved within the classroom or class. These behaviours may include: distracting, talking out of turn, annoying behaviour in the playground, rough play.

STAGE THREE: TEACHER

Further direct action by teachers will be required for repeating misbehaviour, escalating behaviour and not following the teacher's instructions of a more deliberate nature.

These behaviours may include: continually interrupting the learning of others, damaging another person's property, throwing objects, intentionally hurting another person's feelings, rough play or unsafe play.

Consequence:

- *A discussion of the school values at recess or lunchtime with appropriate teacher*
- *A school proforma and student response sheet may be completed and sent home outlining the behaviour and the restorative action*
- *The student's parent may be contacted by telephone or via the proforma*
- *A written or verbal apology may be expected from the student*

STAGE FOUR: PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Some behaviours are referred to the principal and assistant principal directly.

These behaviours may include: refusing to follow a direct instruction from the teacher, engaging in behaviour that severely disrupts the classroom or specialist program, intentionally physically harming another person, deliberate rudeness towards a teacher or adult, severe teasing or bullying.

Consequence:

- *A discussion of the school values at recess or lunchtime with appropriate teacher*
- *An inappropriate Behaviour Stage Four Proforma and Student Response sheet will be completed and sent home*
- *Parents will be notified and asked to return the signed form to the office*
- *A written or verbal apology will be expected from the student*
- *A possible "In school" exclusion from regular program for a set period of time will be determined for each individual case*
- *For breaches of the 'Cybersmart' guidelines; access to internet usage will be reviewed*

STAGE FIVE : PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Continued breaches or serious misbehaviour. Refusing to follow a direct instruction from the principal or assistant principal.

- *One day or longer "in school" exclusion from regular program*
- *A written or verbal apology from the student*

STAGE SIX : PRINCIPAL

Very serious forms of misbehaviour following DET suspension guidelines as measures of last resort and may only be used consistent with Department policy.

STAGE SEVEN : PRINCIPAL AND DET

Where there are extreme cases of misbehaviour and suspension is deemed to be inadequate, the school will follow the expulsion guidelines as set down by the DET.

7. Engaging with families

Eltham East 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
- Providing Parent Helpers Course to ensure confidence and consistency with volunteer help
- 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

Eltham East 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:

- Meeting minutes – staff, PLC, Education support
- Student survey data
- Incidents data
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case management
- CASES21
- SOCS
- Supporting policies and documents are accessed at EEPS website

Eltham East Primary School leadership regularly monitors all meeting minutes to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible. All minutes are electronically filed.

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2022
Consultation	School Council – June 2022 meeting
	School Community – June newsletter
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2024