STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

ISSUE DATE: NOVEMBER 2024 | REVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 2026

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.

Coburg North Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

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

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POLICY

1. School profile

Coburg North Primary School is situated in the northern suburbs approximately nine kilometers from Melbourne's CBD. The school's enrolment has been steadily growing and

we currently have 545 students; 5.6% are EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and 1% are ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students. We have 45 staff members, including 12 Education Support staff. There are 25 classes which are complemented by our specialist programs of Music, Visual Arts, Physical Education, STEAM and Italian.

Our parent community are well-informed and have the vision and skill to work with the school to enrich and improve the educational experience for their children. We have an active Parents and Friends group who organise events to fundraise and bring the parent community together.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Coburg North 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, responsibility and resilience at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to foster curiosity and a lifelong pursuit of knowledge in a dynamic and engaging setting through enriched quality teaching and learning experiences. To nurture a strong sense of self worth and develop the skills to be a contributing member of society.

Our Statement of Values is available on our website.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Coburg North 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 our whole of school, group specific and individual engagement strategies used by staff is included below:

Whole School

Coburg North Primary School implements the following whole school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion.

- 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
- Implementation of School Wide Positive Behaviour supports
- Implementation of Berry Street Education model
- Implementation of The Resilience Project
- 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 Coburg North Primary School use The Victorian Teaching & Learning Model to ensure an explicit, common and shared pedagogical model of instruction, that uses evidenced-based high impact teaching strategies, are incorporated into all lessons
- Teachers at Coburg North Primary School adopt a broad range of 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 and other forums including year group meetings. 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 multi-age connections amongst students through school concerts, athletics, lunchtime clubs and music programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the School Wellbeing Coordinator, Year Group Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Body Safe Australia
    - ESmart and Cybersafety
    - Buddy program

- Programs, incursions and excursions are developed with reference to issue specific needs or behaviours (i.e. social skills, resilience programs)
- Opportunities for student inclusion include sports teams, school concert, bands, CNNN, and lunchtime clubs, such as Chess, Coding and Social Club.
- 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. These include, education and awareness lessons, reporting procedures, staff training and development and support structures for affected individuals.

Targeted

Coburg North Primary School uses more specific strategies, designed to address particular concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles, such as:

- Appointing a Team Leader responsible for their year group, 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
- Supporting Koorie students to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Individual Education Plan (IEP) and our Inclusion and Diversity Policy for further information
- Supporting Out of Home Care students 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
- Supporting students with a disability to ensure their full engagement 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 staff undertaking health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- Staff applying a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Supporting students enrolled under the Department's international student program in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: International Student Program
- Implementing Seasons of Growth program for students who have experienced substantial change or loss
- Implementing Kids Connect program for students who require support navigating social situations

Individual

Coburg North Primary School implements student specific strategies that may be considered and applied on a case by case basis. These include:

- Student Support Groups, see: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Referral to Wellbeing and Inclusion Team (WIT) and Student Support Services
- Referral to Orange Door, CAHMS, Yarra Me, Merri Health Community Centre, Navigator, or Lookout
- Care Team Meeting with the school's WIT and outside agencies that are working with the family and student.

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

- Building constructive relationships with all students, particularly those 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 an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan when required
- Considering if any environmental changes need to be made to better engage and support individual students, for example changing the classroom set up, purchasing individual learning equipment
- Referring the student to:
    - WIT
    - Student Support Services
    - Appropriate external supports such as Yarra Me, Merri Health Community Centre youth and family services, other allied health professionals, CAHMS, child and adolescent mental health services or Orange Door

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 students such as those:
    - with a disability
    - in Out of Home Care
    - who identify as Koorie
    - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring
    - DIP funded

4. Identifying students in need of support

Coburg North 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 to help identify students in need of support to enhance student wellbeing. Coburg North Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- Personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- Attendance records
- Academic performance

- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- Attendance, detention and suspension data
- Engagement with families
- Self-referrals or referrals from peers

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

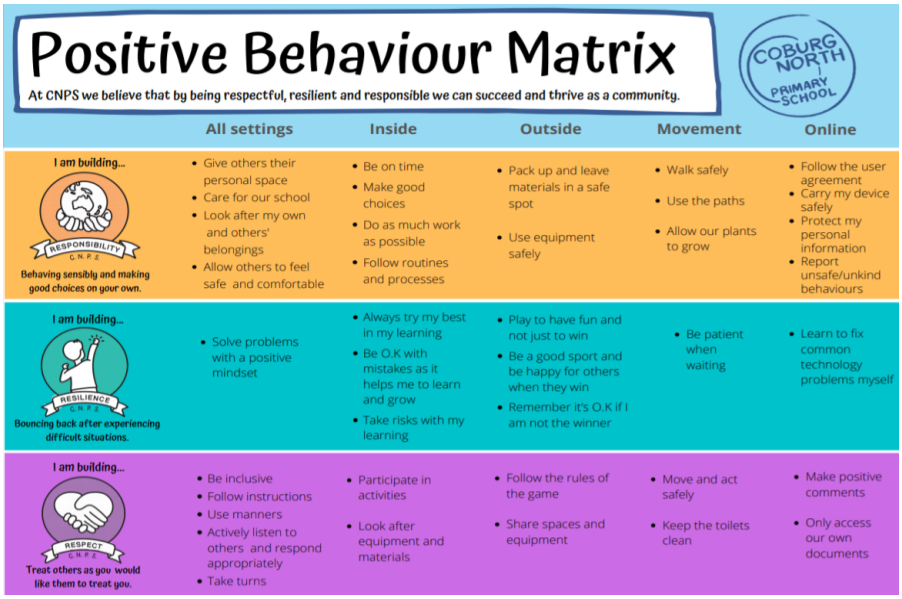
- Participate fully in their education
- Feel safe, secure and happy at school
- Learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- Express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Participate fully in their educational program
- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect and responsibility for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- Respect the right of others to learn and to feel safe and comfortable.

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 Coburg North Primary School, we have a consistent and positive approach to behaviour that will foster a school climate where personal responsibility and self-discipline are developed.

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

Violence, bullying behaviour, 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.

Our school follows the Positive Behaviour Matrix and flow charts of minor and major behaviours to address any behavioural concerns.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Coburg North Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Our school considers, explores and implements positive non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering other disciplinary measures. 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 which 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 within the classroom, spending part of recess or lunch times developing Social and Emotional skills, or other reasonable and proportional responses to behaviour
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Referral to WIT or leadership
- Restorative practices
- Behaviour support and intervention meetings
- Detentions
- Suspensions
- Expulsions

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx

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

7. Engaging with families

Coburg North 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 Communication Channels fact sheet.
- Providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- Involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- Involving families in relevant school decision making
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students, when required.

8. Evaluation

Coburg North 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
- Wellbeing case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

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	November 2024
Consultation	School Council August 2024 School community - Newsletter Nov 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	November 2026