

# OAKLEIGH 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 the school on (03) 9570 1016.

### **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.

Oakleigh South 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.

### **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

## **POLICY**

### **1. School Profile**

Oakleigh South Primary School is nestled in between Metropolitan and Huntingdale Golf Courses and is located approximately 15 kilometres south of the Central Business District of Melbourne. It prides itself in offering all students a wide range of success orientated opportunities and fosters a caring atmosphere with clearly defined expectations, where students can develop in a supportive and safe learning environment. We value and encourage high academic achievement with a strong focus on English and Mathematics.

Our student enrolment is approximately 1050 students, and draws from diverse cultural backgrounds, many with a Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) and with English as an Additional Language (EAL). EAL enrolments account for over 44% of students, with the largest LBOTE groups being Chinese (Mandarin), and Hindi.

Oakleigh South Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

### **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

Oakleigh 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, excellence, integrity, resilience and working together.

Oakleigh South Primary School's vision is for each child to become a happy and confident person, well equipped for the challenges of life-long learning, contributing to the society in which they live and be able to achieve their full academic, creative and social potential. At the heart of Oakleigh South Primary School's educational philosophy is the firm belief that all students can become successful learners and that there are no predetermined limits to what students can accomplish at any age.

Oakleigh South Primary School's community works collaboratively and shares common goals, values and beliefs about the best way to support children and families on their educational path.

We encourage respectful, collaborative relationships between children, families, the school, communities and educators, with our common focus being the child. We value an inclusive, supportive and caring environment where children, families and educators come together as a community of learners. We provide support to each child to promote their health and wellbeing through a spirit of warmth and respect underpinned by a commitment to social justice.

We respect and celebrate the culture and diversity within our community and beyond. We support the individual needs of our children to develop the view that learning is fun, exploratory and exciting.

A broad range of materials, activities, approaches and interconnected learning experiences encourages each child to discover and develop their own strengths. Students are also taught to recognise those areas where they may need assistance or practise to master required skills and content.

Our school philosophy includes a firm commitment to ensuring child safety and wellbeing and ensuring that our school meets all the requirements of the Child Safe Standards.

The school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available on the [Oakleigh South Primary School website](#).

Oakleigh South Primary School's Motto is, 'Together We Achieve'.

### **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Oakleigh 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 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 Oakleigh South Primary School use a repertoire of High Impact Teaching Strategies into all lessons
- teachers at Oakleigh South 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 whole school, junior/senior, and year level assemblies and communicated 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 Group, 'Student Voice' (Years 3 to 6) and other forums including year level assemblies/meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the school choir, athletics, swimming, cross country, various lunchtime clubs, and peer support programs, such as the school's 'Buddies' and 'Playground Buddies' programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to their Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals 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 (4Rs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- 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 Level 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 through our Literacy Intervention programs, 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 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 including being appointed a Learning Mentor (Assistant Principal), 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
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

### **Individual**

Oakleigh 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 Plans and/or a Behaviour Support Plans
- Student Support Groups
- 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 Child First

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. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Oakleigh South Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Principal and Assistant Principals are integral in the wellbeing and welfare of all students at Oakleigh South Primary School. They are available at all times to assist students to work through any issues they are experiencing whether it be at school or at home. Acting quickly with children's concerns, is not only beneficial to the child but it builds a bond between the two which is important in working through and resolving issues promptly. These staff members also work closely with parents and families to assist and support them to cope with problems that may arise. Our staff will link them to the professional service that suits their particular concerns.

Oakleigh South Primary School has an Assistant Principal who manages the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD). The Assistant Principal has regular Student Support Service (SSS) meetings, manages Student Support Groups (SSG) meetings and oversees Student Support Services (SSS) such as speech therapists and psychologists, as well as managing teacher referrals.

The Principal and Assistant Principals play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Oakleigh South 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
- 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 rights and responsibilities**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

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.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Oakleigh South 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.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- referral to the Year Level Leader
- restorative practices
- behaviour support and intervention meetings

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 Oakleigh South Primary 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**

Oakleigh South 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
- 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 education plans for students.

## **8. Evaluation**

Oakleigh South 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

Oakleigh South 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 in our staff handbook
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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](#)

## **RELATED POLICIES 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**

<b>Policy Last Reviewed</b>	August 2023
<b>Consultation</b>	School Council (15/08/2023)
<b>Approved by</b>	Principal – Ron Cantlon, 15/08/2023
<b>Next review date</b>	August 2025