



# Newington Primary School

## Student Wellbeing & Engagement

### POLICY

#### 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.

Newington 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. 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

Newington Primary School is located in Newington, Ballarat, with Victoria Park across the road. Our school has a proud history dating back to 1860. Formerly known as Urquhart Park Primary School and Urquhart Street Primary School, our school was originally located on the corner of Urquhart and Windermere Streets in Ballarat, where the historic building still stands.

Newington Primary School offers a vibrant and engaging education to our students. Our school community has a shared goal of providing for all aspects of each child's academic, social, physical and emotional development. We want our school to be a safe place, where our students feel that they are valued, a place where they can thrive. At Newington, our students are encouraged to appreciate the community around them and to see themselves as global citizens. In addition to acquiring knowledge, they are encouraged to respect and show compassion for others. Our students are fostered to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with others.

As an accredited International Baccalaureate World School, our curriculum is built upon 21st century thinking where all facets of education are connected and interwoven. Our students are immersed in a learning culture strengthened by encouragement, positive relationships, and a challenging curriculum that inspires creative and critical thinking. Inquiry-based learning is blended with other trusted teaching approaches to ensure that children receive instruction in all learning areas that is tailored to meet their needs.

## 2. School values, vision and mission

Our school values are aligned with the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile. This profile, defined by the International Baccalaureate, is a set of characteristics for students to show they are developing life-long learning and inquiry skills and that they are aware of and sensitive to the experiences of others. A student's development in these areas is considered to be a key indicator of their overall achievement as a learner and as an international person.

*Inquirers, Communicators, Courageous, Caring, Thinkers, Knowledgeable, Principled,  
Balanced, Reflective, Open-Minded*

Our school's vision is 'Inspire, Inquire, Grow'

### *Our Mission*

At Newington Primary School, we develop active, global citizens who have the confidence, empathy and resilience to make a positive difference in our world. We empower our students to be creative and critical thinkers, who collaborate with others. We engage in challenging, concept-driven, inquiry learning that promotes learner agency.

## 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Our 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 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 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 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 Student Voice and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs and lunchtime activities)
- all students are welcome to self-refer to their teacher, the Wellbeing Support Officer, Assistant Principal or 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

- provide a consistent and positive approach to student behaviour, aiming to foster the development of personal responsibility and self-discipline.
- implement a whole school social and emotional learning program
- participate in the Body Bright program, including implementing strategies to promote positive body image and adopting a zero-tolerance approach to appearance-related teasing.
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- 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

- 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 – refer to our Marrung Plan.
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- 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, 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
- 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

Our 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 students 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
- 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 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 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**

Our 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 and enhance student wellbeing. The 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, 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**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Student Code of Conduct (Appendix).

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, we 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 such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Assistant Principal
- restorative practices
- reflection
- 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 Newington 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**

Our 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 plans for students.

## **8. Evaluation**

Our 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
- SOCS

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

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2022
Consultation	School Council – October 2022 Newsletter – July 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2024

## **Appendix: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

*At Newington Primary School we are committed to developing a positive school climate which promotes personal growth, achievement and positive relationships for all students. We endeavor to maintain an environment where everyone feels safe and has a sense of belonging and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.*

### **A Positive Approach**

*At Newington Primary School we work to provide a consistent and positive approach to student behaviour, aiming to foster the development of personal responsibility and self-discipline. We are committed to the following strategies:*

- Implementing a whole school social and emotional learning program;
- Encouraging awareness, understanding and respect of school rules;
- Requiring children to accept responsibility for their own actions;
- Giving positive reinforcement to improve self-esteem;
- Publicly acknowledging student achievement;
- Encouraging friendships; and
- Providing appropriate supervision in the school grounds.

### **A Safe & Positive Environment**

We have 3 simply stated school rules which when followed, allow everyone to work and play in a safe and positive environment:

- *Follow instructions the first time*
- *Hands off*
- *No swearing*

### **Classroom Essential Agreements**

In line with the IB Primary Years Program, at the beginning of the year each class develops an Essential Agreement that explicitly states the behaviours that will be expected in the classroom.

### **A Whole School Approach**

*We have a whole school approach to managing inappropriate behaviour. This 5 step procedure is followed in all classrooms and specialists sessions. A similar sequential process is followed in the yard.*

1. Verbal warning or reminder
2. Written warning
3. Time Out within the classroom
4. Time Out in another classroom
5. Report to 'office' / Reflection Room referral

### **Severe Clause:**

*In some cases such as those listed below, sequential consequences are not used – instead a student will be removed from the classroom or playground and referred to the Principal or Assistant Principal.*

- Uses physical violence and/or verbal abuse to another child, teacher or parent
- Refuses to follow a reasonable instruction from a staff member or adult helper
- Wilfully damages or steals property

## **Reflection Room**

The Reflection Room is designed to provide students with a place to reflect on and discuss their actions while learning strategies to help them make positive choices in the future.

A student will be referred to the Reflection Room in two different ways:

1. If they have been through all the stages of their classroom's Code of Conduct and continue misbehaving.
2. They have displayed a significant misbehaviour in the classroom or yard.

## **Promoting Positive Behaviours**

Our Code of Conduct is based on several clearly specified behaviour levels, each with its own implications and consequences for students.

- **Outstanding Citizenship**
- **Level 1 – Behaviour of a High Standard**  
*All students begin the school year on Level 1*
- **Level 2 – Ongoing behaviour of an unacceptable standard**
- **Level 3 – Behaviour in need of improvement**
- **Level 4 – Intervention required**

- Students on

Levels 2,3,4 have displayed behaviours which do not fully fit the Newington Primary School values.

- Students experiencing problems will be given appropriate support and advice. Poor behaviour will have consequences for students and they will be expected to take responsibility for actions that affect the rights of others.
- Parents/Carers will be contacted and informed of any inappropriate behaviours which may lead to their child moving to a different level. Parents/Carers will be asked to assist with measures deemed necessary to promote better behaviour outcomes and a return to Level 1.

## **OUTSTANDING CITIZENSHIP**

- Students are placed on this level as recognition of them making a very positive contribution to our school and consistently being a role model for their peers.
- At this level students will be acknowledged at assembly and awarded with a special certificate. They may also be offered opportunities to participate in extra activities or take on special responsibilities.

### **LEVEL 1**

- Everyone begins the school year on this level. These students follow our school rules, are co-operative and help make our school a happy place by doing their best and striving to achieve.
- At this level students have earned the right to participate in all opportunities, activities and rewards.

### **LEVEL 2**

- Students may be placed on this level when they display one or more of the following behaviours: disrupting or upsetting their class, being rude or unco-operative to teachers, using inappropriate language, not getting their work completed regularly or hurting other students.
- Parents will be notified and students will have the opportunity to discuss their behaviour and consequences, and reflect on what is required in order for them to improve.
- While on this level students will not be automatically invited to participate in class or school-wide rewards and may need special permission from the Principal to take part in incursions, excursions or represent the school in teams or special activities.
- Student Leaders will be suspended from their leadership position while on this level.
- After an appropriate time a student's efforts will be reviewed with the opportunity to return to Level 1.

### **LEVEL 3**

- Students are placed on this level if they do not respond to attempts to assist in improving their behaviour. They may also be placed directly on this level for any serious misbehaviour – including stealing, injuring other students, wilfully destroying school property, verbal abuse, bullying or leaving the school grounds without permission,
- At this level parents will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss their child's behaviour.
- Students may be isolated from their class to complete work and/or withdrawn from the playground at recess and lunchtimes.
- Students will need special permission from the Principal to participate in incursions and excursions. They will not be allowed to represent the school in teams or special activities.
- Student leaders placed on Level 3 will have their position reviewed.
- After an appropriate time if a student's behaviour has been of an acceptable level, they will be returned to Level 2.

### **LEVEL 4**

Extreme continued inappropriate behaviour will lead to suspension and enforcement of intervention programs.