



## Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



### HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Winters Flat Primary School on 03 5472 1522 or [winters.flat.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:winters.flat.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

### 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.

Winters Flat 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

Winters Flat Primary School was established by local residents in 1860, our school grew steadily until 1964 when we moved to our current Roberts Street location in Castlemaine, approximately 130 km north west of Melbourne. We have 108 students from foundation to grade 6 and 20 staff members including a school wellbeing coordinator and visiting psychologist.

Our school grounds are the largest in Castlemaine and we are adjacent to Campbell's Creek and surrounding native bushland. Most students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. Winter's Flat Primary School has developed close ties to the local community, benefiting from support from a range of local businesses.

Our school population encompasses people of different ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, disabilities, genders, religions, cultures and sexual orientations. Our vision is to create an inclusive school community where students develop the social, physical, academic, creative and emotional (S.P.A.C.E) skills that are the foundation for success in life. We are a school that celebrates the diversity within our community and promotes a deep respect for each other and the environment. We strive to provide a nurturing environment to foster a strength-based program to enable students to be their best selves.

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

It is our school's belief that each child must be treated as an individual and encouraged to develop a high level of achievement in all curriculum areas.

Our school is a SPACE school, meaning that we cater for each child's Social, Physical, Academic, Creative and Emotional wellbeing. Our purpose is to develop our students socially, physically, academically, creatively and emotionally.

We believe that it is the responsibility of all involved with the child to help each child develop their full potential as a thinking, responsible, caring individual. Children will develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to understand and contribute to society.

We believe that children should be encouraged to respond to high expectations and develop high expectations of themselves.

We further believe they should be able to work effectively with others. To this end each child is seen as an individual and is encouraged to grow in confidence and self-worth, taking more responsibility for their own learning.

A genuine partnership between teachers, students and parents is seen as an integral aspect of effective education. The engagement of parents in policy development, classroom programs and open communication is to be pursued by all those involved with the school. Pupils are encouraged to have input into decision-making concerning program and school development.

Our values at Winters Flat Primary School are based on the teachings of our local Indigenous creation figure, Bunjil are:

- Care for Self
- Care for others
- Care for the environment

We do this through our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support system

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

Winters Flat 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 supported. 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
- Use of the dojo points system for incentives and rewards
- Use of the Berry Street system of trauma informed behaviour support strategies
- Respectful relationships program
- Implementation of the Kimochis program for emotional literacy
- 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 by displaying inclusive posters and hosting a pride club once a week at lunch time
- 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
- deliver a broad curriculum including creative clubs, passions and pathways and gardening programs to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Winters Flat 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, in school assemblies and communication to parents
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Care Crows leaders, school captains and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers or Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through Cobbers, athletics and music programs.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, student leaders 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.
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- 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 class has a student leader, class teacher and whole school wellbeing coordinator responsible for their class, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their class, 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 – we have strong links to our local Djarra mob and Koorie students are able attend The Meeting Place program fortnightly
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LQBT student support. There is a well-established ally group of students and staff who meet weekly.
- 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 through the Berry Street program
- students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

### **Individual**

Winters Flat 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
- 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
  - Re-engagement programs

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**

Winters Flat 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 that help to identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Winters Flat 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 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 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/Student code of conduct and can be found here:

[https://wintersflatps.schoolzineplus.com/\\_file/media/4849/2022\\_child\\_safety\\_code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](https://wintersflatps.schoolzineplus.com/_file/media/4849/2022_child_safety_code_of_conduct.pdf)

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. <https://www.winters-flat-ps.vic.edu.au/school-policies> 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, Winters Flat Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, consequences and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the consequential action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as withdrawal of privileges, withdrawal from class or being sent home. 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. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Consequential 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 leadership team
- restorative practices
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension

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 Winters Flat 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**

Winters Flat Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will continue to strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## **8. Evaluation**

Winters Flat 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

Winters Flat 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**

- 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/carers notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education 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 2023
Consultation	School Community via Newsletter 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2023, School council 18 <sup>th</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before July 2025