



STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 9799 1216.

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.

River Gum 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

At River Gum Primary School our core values are Respect, Equality, Inclusion and Excellence and our school motto is "Together we can ... For every child, every day in every classroom". We believe our school provides a supportive and productive learning environment where all students can access success by fostering positive relationships and knowing each student.

To support our local community and school demographic we have implemented a Wellbeing Scope and Sequence, predominately based around RRRR, and E Safety, with Wellbeing being timetabled in every classroom each week and at point of need. We are a lead school for Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships.

We have a variety of established local partnerships which provide opportunities to support the growth and development of our school community. Partnerships include: The Smith Family, Food Bank and The Ardoch Foundation, and First Call Funding.

Classroom support to provide greater differentiated explicit teaching in small groups is delivered through an Intervention and Extension program within the classroom.

We offer a variety of experiences to engage our students through Specialist subjects in F-6 including: Music, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Science & Technology, and Physical Education. Our Performing Arts Centre has a 500 seat theatre and hosts our school production, assemblies, special events, music & performing arts classes, and is also hired out regularly by local community groups.

Our school kitchen is utilised to hold Breakfast Club each morning before school, and provides students with a warm inviting environment and a menu to suit all tastes. This is popular with many students as they are able to grab a quick bite on the run, or sit down with their peers.

School values, philosophy and vision

At River Gum Primary School we embrace high expectations for both students and teachers in everything we do.

This is captured in our school vision-

"At River Gum our students own their learning and our teachers use their pedagogical knowledge to personalise learning. We value community relationships and reflection. Our community builds the foundations of River Gum Primary School".

Our school community is a partner for focused learning where "Together we can for every child every day" build the culture of life-long learning through the many engaging programs we offer.

The school is at the forefront of pedagogical innovation by implementing school-wide changes through reshaping curriculum, creating a culture of continuous assessment and self-improvement, and engaging parents in our school community. Our teachers and students design engaging, developmentally appropriate learning activities that value and respect the individuality of each child and their different learning needs. The teaching and

learning environment is supportive and productive through building positive relationships through knowing each student.

We have created a community of learners where students are expected to own their own learning and teachers are expected to make the learning relevant and applicable for each student.

Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

River Gum Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. 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, Pivot Wellbeing data, parent opinion survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at River Gum Primary School 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 at River Gum 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
- carefully planned transition programs to support students new to the school, and those 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 Leadership and Agency. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teacher and Year Level Coordinator.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Wellbeing Leader, PLT 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:
 - Respectful Relationships (RRRR)
 - Relationships and sexuality health
- 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 behaviour such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment

Targeted

- each year group has a PLT 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 their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Education Support Officer when appropriate
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all our culturally and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from a refugee background
- We provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ and follow the departments policy on LGBTIQ Student Support
- All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and will be 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 Departments policy on Students with a disability, such as reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and individual education plans and student support groups..
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

- Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Wellbeing Leader and Student Support Services
- Resilience project
- Referral to external service providers where appropriate

River Gum 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 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 services, allied health professionals, Headspace, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or Child First/Child Protection

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 Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional 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.

1. Identifying students in need of support

River Gum 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 and enhance student wellbeing. Our 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
- Pivot weekly wellbeing check in data
- 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

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.

Student behavioural expectations

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 our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, River Gum Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing. Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the 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 and 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 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>

Error! Hyperlink reference not valid. 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 River Gum 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.

Engaging with families

River Gum 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
- involving families with 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.

Evaluation

River Gum 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
- Pivot Wellbeing Data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

River Gum 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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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	24 th June 2022
Consultation	June 2022: Staff and School Council
Approved by	Principal: Robyn Trzeciak
Next scheduled review date	24 th June 2024