

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Bellbrae PS on 52612660 or email bellbrae.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.

Bellbrae 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 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. Engagement strategies
- 4. Identifying students in need of support
- 5. Student rights and responsibilities
- 6. Student behavioural expectations
- 7. Engaging with families
- 8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

Established in 1861, Bellbrae Primary School offers an outstanding education to its students. We believe in a set of core values that shape the culture and philosophy of our school, underpinning all

learning programs, school organisation and teaching practices. Our school vision focusses on creating a community of critical thinkers and innovative learners.

We offer our students, staff and families a strong sense of community and belonging, enabling our students to develop and grow in a unique environment that is enjoyable, supportive, relevant and able to offer challenges that empower students to be life-long learners and analytical problem solvers.

At Bellbrae PS we offer a great deal more than just a basic education. Our students enjoy a wide range of opportunities and enrichment activities that are regularly offered. These may include: debating, Swimming programs that are both pool and beach based dependent on age level, gymnastics, athletics, individual instrumental music tuition, Life Education, before/ after school care, Preparation for Puberty, inter-school sports, buddies program, Junior School Council, student leadership programs, lunch time clubs, camps, excursions, visiting performers and a great deal more opportunities arise on a regular basis. The Physical Education program transcends the 'traditional' approach and includes Blue Earth as a component, as well as student participation in activities as diverse as golf clinics, snow ski competition, sailing and lacrosse.

A class structure aligned with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0 levels creates opportunities for students to share their learning with their peers. Whole school theme days and multi-age days are regular occurrences at Bellbrae.

Our school values are central to our community and set the expectations we strive for across our school. Our School Wide Positive Behaviour supports are based upon these values and are explicitly modelled and taught to students. This approach is complemented by the allocation of students to specific 'House Groups', where certain norms, behaviours and expectations are reinforced at an individual, cohort and whole school level.

This is further supported by the Student Welfare Team and the support that this program offers both students and families.

Explicit expectations are outlined in the Behaviour Management Plan, which all families receive at the beginning of each academic year.

Teaching and learning is influenced by the local and wider community as well as DE guidelines. Our entire staff endeavours to provide a challenging and engaging curriculum. This is supported by specialist teachers in Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and LOTE (Indonesian).

We enjoy a close working relationship with our neighbouring schools, and schools in the Colac region, through our involvement in the Barwon-South Network of schools. This network includes primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and a P-12 College. We believe that when a school that is networked with other schools around it can achieve more than a school operating alone. In our local area, we have been very successful at strengthening the links between schools and Kindergartens, and then working collaboratively together. As well as sharing curriculum initiatives and resources, we also employ a range of specially qualified staff who can provide a range of services to our member schools.

Bellbrae Primary School is a wonderful and unique place to learn where there is a commitment from ALL staff to provide the best learning opportunities for ALL students!

School values, philosophy and vision

Bellbrae 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, Resilience and Aspire.

These values are seen as being central to the life of our school and how all members of the school community should conduct themselves.

Our school's vision is to create a community of critical thinkers and innovative learners. We aim to offer students, staff and families a strong sense of community and belonging, enabling our students to develop and grow in a unique environment that is enjoyable, supportive and relevant and we try to offer challenges that empower students to be life-long learners and responsible citizens.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://www.bellbraeps.vic.edu.au/about-us/policies>

Engagement strategies

Bellbrae 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
- 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 data, attitudes to school survey, parent opinion survey, student management and behaviour data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Bellbrae Primary School use whole school Literacy and Numeracy pedagogical models as a 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 Bellbrae 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 values are embedded 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 at school assemblies and through 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 Junior School Council and other forums including welcome circles and cohort level 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 cross—age connections amongst students through school concerts, athletics, and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to approach Department 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
 - Berry Street Education Model
 - Backflips Against Bullying
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

Targeted

- each year group has a Department Leader responsible for their year level, 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
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

Bellbrae 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 allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst

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
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

2. Identifying students in need of support

Bellbrae 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Bellbrae 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
- referrals made by classroom teachers

3. 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.

4. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Bellbrae Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Bellbrae Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. 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 implements 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 Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- attendance at reflection sessions
- 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 Bellbrae Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

5. Engaging with families

Bellbrae 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
- Communicating student achievement via the digital platform Compass
- Sharing learning and classroom activities via the digital platform Seesaw
- 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.

6. Evaluation

Bellbrae 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
- minor and major behaviour data
- school reports
- parent survey data
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Bellbrae 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
- 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

Statement of Values and School Philosophy

Bullying Prevention Policy

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Child Safe Code of Conduct

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	17 th October 2025
Approved by	Principal – Adrian Waters
Next scheduled review date	Before October 2027