

# Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

*Ratified by School Council on 24/10/23*



[Help for non-English speakers](#)

[If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.](#)

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students;
- expectations for positive student behaviour;
- that support is available to students and families; and
- CPS policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Coatesville Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and inspiring learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and where 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.

## Definitions

**Bullying** - The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological.

**Cyber bullying** - a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through communication technology such as mobile phones and digital applications. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings).

**Essential Agreements** - a set of agreed positive behaviours linked to the school values and co constructed with the students.

**Harassment** - any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which are uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

**IB-PYP** - International Baccalaureate – Primary Years Programme.

**Respectful Relationships Program** - Respectful Relationships education is a core component of the Victorian Curriculum from foundation to year 12. It is all about embedding a culture of respect and equality across the entire school community.

**Living and Growing Program** - This program is provided by Sex Education Australia and offers students the opportunity to gain accurate and age-appropriate information about body safety, consent, anatomy, reproduction and puberty. The program aligns with the Victorian Curriculum and supports schools to meet Child Safe Standard 3.

**Cyber Safety Project** -The Cyber Safety Project team runs sessions at school that empower and equip students with the knowledge and skills to maintain their own safety when connecting online.

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'Who We Are' unit of Inquiry - An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.

Ready, Set, Learn program - Gates open at 8.45am and students walk themselves to class. Students have the opportunity from 8.45am -9am to settle into their days learning and to practise a skill they need support with.

Restorative Practice - A strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim- Department of Education and Training (DET).

School Values - Achievement, Cooperation, Respect, Responsibility and Harmony.

SOG - Student Support Group

Health - Physical, Emotional and Social wellbeing

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## Policy

### **1. School Profile**

Coatesville Primary School was established in 1953 and is located on Mackie Road, East Bentleigh, south-east of Melbourne. We are an authorised International Baccalaureate – Primary Years Programme (IB-PYP) World School. There is an emphasis on excellence in teaching and learning with a collective belief that all students can be successful, independent learners when learning is centred upon an 'inquiry approach,' in line with IB-PYP principles and we follow the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) Victorian Curriculum guidelines. Approximately 800 students are enrolled in our school, from Prep to Grade 6 and there are 65 school staff members, including a Leading Teacher in Literacy and Learning Specialists in STEAM and the IB - Primary Years Program.

The school underwent significant redevelopment in recent years and we now utilise dynamic and flexible 21st century learning environments that support student and staff collaboration. Most students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. The school has developed close ties to the local and broader community by providing access to our state-of-the-art sports stadium and by offering extra-curricular activities which include but are not limited to, instrumental music and sports training.

Our school is culturally diverse with 35% of families having a language background other than English (LOTE), with the largest mother tongue or LOTE groups being Hebrew, Greek and Russian. We are proud of our diverse and inclusive school community and provide opportunities for parents, staff and students to honour significant cultural events and acknowledge and include the diversity of backgrounds and experiences through the IB-PYP program.

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We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Coatesville Primary School's 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, cooperation, harmony and achievement at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is:

"To nurture the educational journey of all within the school community, so that we 'Aspire Higher' through an engaging and relevant, inquiry-based curriculum, that empowers us to be internationally minded, life-long learners."

To this end, we support students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

## 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Coatesville Primary School staff utilise 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.

**School-wide**, targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school includes:

- Setting high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers,
- Prioritising 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-wide data from enrolment information, attendance, student surveys, Attitudes to School survey (parent, staff and student), student management data and assessment data.
- Using the EPIC (Engage, Provide focus, Investigate and connect, Celebrate and evaluate) instructional framework which provides an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- Adopting 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 planning transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling, including a Prep Orientation program, Grade to Grade Step-Up program and Grade 6 to Year 7 transition program.
- Acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents.
- Monitoring student attendance and continuing to implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.

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- Giving students the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and peer support groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, grade level leader, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Providing student leadership programs, including School Captains and Vice-Captains, House Captains and Vice Captains and Student Representative Council (SRC).
- Creating opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and the buddy program.
- Welcoming students to self-refer to the Teaching and Learning Leaders, First Aid Officer, 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, engagement and wellbeing.
- Providing programs such as:
  - 'Step Up'
  - 'Who We Are' unit of inquiry,
  - Ready, Set, Learn,
  - The Living and Growing Program
  - The Cyber Safety Project Program
  - Respectful Relationships Program
- Providing opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities).
- Ensuring 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. For example the Complaints Policy. The Complaints and Concerns Process for Students document.

Specific strategies to address particular **groups of students** used by our school includes:

- Ensuring each cohort has a grade level Teaching and Learning Leader responsible for their cohort, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support,
- Supporting indigenous students to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture,
- Ensuring all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school,
- Providing a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+,
- Ensuring 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,
- Supporting students with a disability 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,
- Ensuring staff undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year.

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- Ensuring Grade 6 students assist with the Prep Transition program by being allocated a new prep student to mentor as a Prep Buddy,
- Ensuring students from Grade 1 – Grade 5 participate in a buddy program to build community.
- Providing an ongoing commitment to professional learning of staff,
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of year level or group data such as attendance, student survey, year level assessment data, Attitude to School Surveys, student management data, and enrolment information.

Strategies that support and promote **individual** engagement include:

- 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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family.
- Building constructive relationships with students at risk, including students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- Meeting with students and their parents/carers 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, peer support.
- Organising Student Support Groups (SSG) every term for students with funded support and or students with special needs. Refer to the Department of Education and Training (DET) website for more information on student support groups.
- Referring the student to external organisations, including Child First, Family Life, Alfred CYMHS and OnPsych, as required.

## 4. Identifying students in need of support

Coatesville 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. Coatesville will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- gathering personal, health and learning information upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled;
- monitoring attendance records;
- monitoring academic performance;
- staff observations such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation;
- engagement with families; and
- staff referrals.

## 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 values and Essential Agreements highlight the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

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Students have the right to:

- Participate fully in their education.
- Feel safe, secure and happy at school.
- Learn and play 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 the school's educational program.
- Arrive on time for school and attend regularly.
- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate Coatesville Primary School's whole School Values, inclusive of, respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other 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 values and Essential Agreements.

Violence, bullying behaviour, 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, Coatesville will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents/carers 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 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
- 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 Coatesville 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

Coatesville Primary School values the input of parents and carers. We are committed to supporting and partnering families to engage in their child's learning and build their child's capacity as active learners and global citizens.

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

- ensuring that everyone has access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent/carer 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

Coatesville 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/carer survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Coatesville 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:

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- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes

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](#)

## **[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
- LGBTIQA+ 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



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## Policy Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as part of the school's regular policy review cycle.

Policy last reviewed	October 2023
Consultation	Policy Subcommittee 10/10/23 SRC - 18/10/23 School Council - 24/10/23
Approved by	Principal & School Council
Next scheduled review date	2025