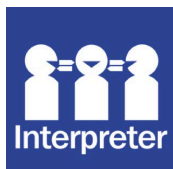


STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office on (03) 9836 7121

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.

Balwyn 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

Balwyn Primary School was established in 1868 and is located in the eastern metropolitan suburb of Balwyn, approximately 10 kilometres east of Melbourne, within the City of Boroondara.

The school is a diverse and multicultural community that aims to foster in students a love of learning, strong communication skills, and the ability to be responsible, creative, and critical thinkers who are socially connected and resilient.

Balwyn Primary School has an enrolment of just under 600 students, fluctuating yearly due to transfers from other Victorian schools, interstate and overseas.

Our dedicated and professional staff include Learning Specialists, teacher leaders, classroom teachers, and specialist teachers in English as an Additional Language (EAL), Learning Intervention through the Tutor Learning Initiative (TLI), Visual Arts, Mandarin, Music, Physical Education (PE), and STEM. They are also supported by our Wellbeing Officer, Administration Staff, School Nurse, and Education Support Staff, all of whom demonstrate expertise, enthusiasm, and a strong commitment to continuous learning.

Balwyn Primary School's multi-age class structure is underpinned by the belief that learning is developmental. A focused teaching approach enables students to grow and achieve as individuals. Flexible grouping is used to meet student needs, and some students work in classrooms beyond their own to access learning at or above their Victorian Curriculum level.

The school has implemented a whole-school Instructional Model to ensure that all students are taught at their academic and social-emotional point of need and are provided with a targeted and engaging learning program.

Balwyn Primary School is committed to ongoing evaluation of student and school needs, planning for future developments, and providing the highest quality education. The school regularly hosts visitors from across Victoria, interstate, and overseas who come to observe and learn from its exemplary teaching and learning programs.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Balwyn Primary School aims to foster a collaborative, enriching, and challenging learning environment that provides opportunities for success for every student. We highly value education as a partnership between children, staff, parents, and the local community.

Our school motto, *"Aim High,"* and our core values underpin our philosophy. These values are embedded in all teaching and learning programs and are reinforced through student-negotiated norms. The five core values that guide learning at Balwyn Primary School are **Responsibility, Respect, Integrity, Belonging, and Empathy.**

Our school vision is: *"Nurturing global citizens for personal success in an ever-changing world."*

We are committed to educational excellence through vibrant teaching and a curriculum that is challenging, innovative, and relevant. This empowers our students to become internationally minded, respectful, and responsible lifelong learners.

At Balwyn Primary School, we value the whole child. We strive to develop strong self-esteem, confidence, and independence within a stimulating, supportive, and collaborative learning environment. Student voice and learner agency are highly valued and actively encouraged, enabling students to shape and influence their learning.

Our Statement of Values is available on the school website at <https://balwynps.vic.edu.au/aboutus>.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Balwyn Primary School implements a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our learning community. We acknowledge that some students may need additional social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students may change over time as they develop 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

- Setting high and consistent expectations for all staff, students, and parents/carers
- Embedding the school's *Statement of Values* into the curriculum and promoting it to students, staff, and families as the foundation of our school community
- Creating an inclusive, engaging, and supportive culture through the Values Program, *Statement of Values*, and *Student Code of Conduct*, underpinned by high expectations for all
- Building and sustaining positive relationships between staff and students through the Values Program, *Student Code of Conduct*, *Respectful Relationships*, and class norms
- Prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising their vital role in student wellbeing
- Encouraging partnerships with parents/carers through open communication, School Council, PFTA, parent groups, and classroom helper programs
- Welcoming and responding to all parents/carers as partners in student learning
- Analysing and responding to a range of school data, including attendance, *Attitudes to School Survey*, parent surveys, student management data, and school-based assessment
- Using an instructional framework to ensure a consistent, evidence-based model of high-impact teaching across all classrooms
- Embedding a whole-school Instructional Model to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students
- Implementing wellbeing approaches aligned with a restorative practices framework
- Using a broad range of teaching and assessment strategies to meet the diverse learning styles, strengths, and needs of students
- Planning comprehensive transition programs to support students moving between year levels and entering the school, including the *Bright Beginnings* sessions
- Celebrating and acknowledging student achievement and positive behaviour in the classroom, during assemblies (e.g. *Balwyn Achievers* and *Values Keepers*), and through newsletters
- Monitoring student attendance and promoting consistent attendance through regular communication with the school community and targeted strategies at the whole-school, cohort, and individual levels
- Facilitating student voice and learner agency through student focus groups, Student Representative Council, year level meetings, and peer support groups
- Providing students with multiple avenues to express concerns and seek support, including self-referral to the Student Wellbeing Leader, School Nurse, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals, and Principal - supported by our open-door policy

- Creating opportunities for cross-age connections through multi-age learning, the school choir and ensembles, musicals, sporting events, cultural celebrations, and peer support programs
- Implementing school-wide positive behaviour support programs such as *Respectful Relationships*, *Bully Stoppers*, and *Safe Schools*
- Delivering targeted programs, incursions, and excursions to address specific behavioural needs (e.g. anger management)
- Offering a comprehensive buddy program for all students from Foundation to Year 6
- Encouraging student leadership opportunities across F–6 through the *Junior School Council* (JSC), with two class representatives coordinating wellbeing initiatives like the *Friendship Bench*
- Providing senior student leadership roles in Year 6 through the *Student Leadership Program*, including Principal Advisory Leaders (PALs), Student Wellbeing Action Team (SWAT), and additional roles in Digital Technologies, Library, LOTE, Visual Arts, Music, and PE
- Offering a wide range of engaging curricular and extracurricular opportunities such as Interschool Sport, enrichment orchestras and choirs (F–2, 3–4, 5–6, and Balwyn Singers), school musicals, coding, F–6 camp programs, Instrumental Music, High Ability Learners programs, inquiry learning, lunchtime clubs (e.g. Chess, Library), and learning from parent experts—promoting student choice and engagement in their learning

Targeted

- Each year level has a designated Year Level Leader who regularly liaises with classroom teachers to monitor student health and wellbeing and serves as a point of contact for students requiring additional support beyond the classroom teacher.
- 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
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all culturally and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background.
- We provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQA+ and follow the Department’s policy on [LGBTIQA+ 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
- 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

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- Referral to the Student Wellbeing Officer and Student Support Services for specific trauma or incidents
- Referral to ChildFirst
- Engagement with the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports

Balwyn 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 and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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 Plan 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

Balwyn Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure all students are nurtured intellectually, emotionally, and socially. We recognise that student wellbeing is essential to academic and personal success.

In collaboration with Year Level Leaders and the Wellbeing Leader, classroom teachers play a key role in identifying students who may require additional support. Together, they develop and implement strategies to enhance student wellbeing and ensure a coordinated response to individual needs.

To identify students who may require extra emotional, social, or educational support, Balwyn Primary School uses a range of tools and information, including:

- 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, 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 for students, staff, and families are outlined in Balwyn Primary School's Statement of Values and Code of Conduct. These expectations guide the way all members of the school community

interact and support a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. Incidents of student bullying will be addressed in accordance with the school's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student breaches the behavioural expectations set out in the Statement of Values and Code of Conduct, Balwyn Primary School will implement a staged response, consistent with the Department of Education's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents and carers will be informed of the behaviour and the actions taken by teachers, other staff members, or school leadership.

The school prioritises the use of positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour. Disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges, or temporary removal from class are considered only after other strategies have been explored and implemented.

Disciplinary and restorative practices may form part of a broader, staged approach to managing inappropriate behaviour. These are used alongside engagement and support strategies to ensure that any underlying factors contributing to the behaviour are identified and addressed. At Balwyn Primary School, all disciplinary actions are applied fairly and consistently, with students always given the 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 to a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- detentions
- 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.

The Principal of Balwyn 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

Balwyn 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 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

Balwyn 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
- PSDMS
- DIFs
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data

Balwyn 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 or online parent/carer communication portal
- Included in staff induction processes and annual staff training
- Included in volunteer induction processes and training for relevant volunteers
- Discussed at annual staff briefings or meetings
- Included in staff handbook or manual
- Hard copy available 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 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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2025
Consultation	Education Subcommittee
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2027