Dorset Primary School
School No.5132

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2026-2028

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact our office.

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.

Dorset 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.

POLICY

1. **School profile**

   Dorset Primary School is located in Croydon, Victoria, and provides a safe, inclusive and engaging learning environment for students from Foundation to Year 6. We value strong partnerships with families and our community and are committed to supporting every student to achieve their personal best academically, socially and emotionally.

2. **School values, philosophy and vision**
   Dorset Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy underpins our school community. Students, staff and families are encouraged to demonstrate our core values of respect, integrity, gratitude and resilience. Our vision is to empower

every student to achieve their personal best and thrive as a positive member of the community.

1) Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Dorset Primary School is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and engaging learning environment where every student is known, valued and supported. We recognise the importance of positive relationships, a strong sense of belonging and student voice in promoting wellbeing and engagement. We also acknowledge that some students may require additional academic, social or emotional support at different stages of their learning and development.

1.1.1. Universal (Whole-School) Strategies

1.1.1.1. high and consistent expectations for all students, staff and families
1.1.1.2. positive relationships between students and staff
1.1.1.3. a safe, inclusive and respectful school culture
1.1.1.4. implementation of School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)
1.1.1.5. teaching and promoting our school values
1.1.1.6. the Respectful Relationships program
1.1.1.7. evidence-based teaching practices that support diverse learning needs
1.1.1.8. monitoring of student wellbeing, attendance and engagement data
1.1.1.9. recognition and celebration of positive behaviour and achievement
1.1.1.10. strong partnerships with families as key partners in learning
1.1.1.11. student leadership and opportunities for student voice
1.1.1.12. transition programs supporting students moving into primary school
1.1.1.13. buddy programs, clubs, sports, camps, excursions
1.1.1.14. access to wellbeing support and support staff

1.1.2.**Targeted Supports – may include:**

1.1.2.1. additional wellbeing check-ins and small-group programs
1.1.2.2. support for Koorie students, students with disability, students in Out of Home Care and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
1.1.2.3. English as an Additional Language (EAL) support
1.1.2.4. social skills and friendship programs
1.1.2.5. trauma-informed practices
1.1.2.6. consultation with families and external agencies where appropriate
1.1.2.7. Student Support Groups (SSGs), Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and reasonable adjustments to support student learning and wellbeing.

1.1.3. Individual Supports

1.1.3.1. developing positive relationships with students and families
1.1.3.2. individual learning, wellbeing or behaviour support plans
1.1.3.3. regular meetings with families to respond to student needs

1.1.3.4. referrals to school-based wellbeing support, SSS or external agencies
1.1.3.5. environmental and classroom adjustments to support engagement
1.1.3.6. attendance monitoring and attendance improvement planning
1.1.3.7. regular SSG meetings for students requiring ongoing support.

Identifying Students in Need of Support

Dorset Primary School uses a range of information to identify students who may require additional support, including:

- enrolment, health and wellbeing information
- attendance data
- academic progress and achievement data
- teacher observations of learning, behaviour and wellbeing
- student voice and self-reflections
- family communication and feedback
- Student Support Groups, Individual Education Plans and wellbeing referrals.

This information helps ensure that students receive timely and appropriate support to maximise their learning, wellbeing and engagement at school.

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 and School Philosophy highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in all aspects of their education
- feel safe, supported, valued and included at school
- learn in an environment that is free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination, racism and intimidation
- express their views, ideas, feelings and concerns in an appropriate and respectful manner
- be treated with respect, fairness and dignity

Students have the responsibility to:

- actively participate in their learning and school activities
- demonstrate respect for themselves, other students, staff, visitors and members of the school community
- contribute to a safe, inclusive and positive learning environment
- respect the rights of others to learn, play and feel safe

- follow school expectations and behave in a way that reflects the school's values

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.

3. Student behavioural expectations and management

At Dorset Primary School, student behaviour is guided by our Statement of Values and School Philosophy and our school values of Respect, Integrity, Gratitude and Resilience.

Bullying, violence, harassment, discrimination, racism and other harmful behaviours are not accepted. Concerns will be addressed in line with school and Department of Education policies.

When a student does not meet behavioural expectations, staff will respond calmly, fairly and consistently. Wherever possible, we use positive strategies, restorative practices and support measures to help students learn from their behaviour and make positive choices.

Parents/carers may be informed when concerns arise, and students will be given an opportunity to share their perspective. Where required, disciplinary measures may be used alongside appropriate supports to promote student wellbeing, safety and engagement.

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
- 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:

- Suspensions Policy
- Expulsions Policy
- Restraint and 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 Dorset 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.

4. Engaging with families

Dorset values the input of parents and carers, and we 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/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication supported by our Communicating with School Staff Policy.
- providing 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 through School Council
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

5. Evaluation

Dorset collects 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 are assessed on an annual basis include:

- Student Wellbeing Survey (term-by-term basis)
- Attitudes to School Survey (Years 4-6)
- Compass Chronicle data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Dorset also regularly monitors 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 is communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website and Compass
- 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/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 policies and resources are relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Attendance
- Behaviour - Students
- Child Safe Standards
- Expulsions
- Koorie Education
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support
- Restraint and Seclusion
- Student Engagement
- Students with Disability
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Suspensions

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	September 2026
Consultation	Consultation with School Council – October 29 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2028