

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Bridgewood Primary School on 03 8766 9400 or bridgewood.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.

Bridgewood 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

Bridgewood Primary School opened in 2018 and is located approximately 50 kilometres southeast of Melbourne. We have approximately 560 students enrolled from Foundation to Year 6 and approximately 60 school staff members including a Learning Specialist (Mental Health and Wellbeing), a Leading Teacher (Disability Inclusion), a Student Wellbeing Coach and counsellor.

Bridgewood is a site with a primary school and a fully integrated child and family centre under the same roofline. The facility is designed to ensure the seamless transition of students from maternal and child health to kinder and through to primary school. The curriculum and the facility design support a consistency that is replicated across the year levels. Professionals collaborate to deliver enhanced learning, development and

wellbeing opportunities for every child and family. Our school is in the Arcadia Estate and is a part of the Officer Educational Precinct, with neighbouring schools Officer Secondary College and Officer Specialist School.

Our school is culturally diverse with 42% of families having a language background other than English (LOTE), with 5% Hindi speaking, 4% Gujarati, 4% Sinhalese and 3.4% Urdu speaking and many other languages represented in the school. The school also has representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

Bridgewood Integrated Child and Family Centre caters for babies in the Maternal and Child Health program through to kindergarten. Bridgewood Primary School caters for Foundation to Grade 6. The school has been designed for a long-term enrolment in excess of 451 students with a peak enrolment of approximately 900. Bridgewood Learning Communities are designed around modifiable spaces that accommodate multiple learning approaches and can flexibly respond to the requirements of students and staff, creating a sense of shared ownership, inclusion and successful learning.

The facilities have been designed to overcome traditional barriers in education and create an integrated practice that supports learners from birth through to the end of primary schooling. A shared practice of this nature also positions the school to engage parents in supporting the learning of their child through the whole learning journey. Staff in each learning community are collectively responsible for the wellbeing and learning outcomes of the students within that community.

Our mission is to develop socially competent and inspired learners who strive to achieve their best. Learning is personalised and achievement is measured on the growth and development of each student across the curriculum.

The school actively seeks to engage with parents and the community to ensure a positive and inclusive school culture in which every student has the opportunity to succeed. The school works collaboratively with students and parents/carers to establish fair and respectful wellbeing and behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address welfare or behavioural concerns which can impact on the learning environment of every student.

The school sets high standards for students both academically and social/emotionally. Mutual respect is the key to building strong working relationships between staff, students and the wider school community. The staff are committed to working closely with all key stakeholders to ensure positive student engagement and wellbeing for all students.

The school appreciates its diverse student and parent population, and has measures in place to be inclusive of all students and equal access for all to the school's curriculum and co-curricular programs. Our teaching and learning philosophy is important in engaging all students in their academic learning. Our wellbeing program is tailored to address students' personal and social learning at various developmental stages of their education. Our Wellbeing Team and the Assistant Principals through the Program for Students with Disabilities provides vital assistance and support to students with learning challenges and/or disabilities both in and out of the classroom. Student leadership capacity is fostered through the Student Representative Council, House and School Captains and peer support mentors. Student voice in their learning is a noted feature of the wellbeing programs in the school.

Student wellbeing (social, emotional and cognitive engagement) is addressed strategically and in various ways. At risk students are supported by our Wellbeing Team which includes the DET principal class and psychologist, education support staff, the health nurse and school social worker. External agencies as well as consultants

within the school setting work with students and families on a more targeted and individualised level to address concerns and support the social and emotional development of students with increased need for support. When relationships break down between members of the school community, we use a collaborative and supportive approach to build positive relationships and address concerns in order to restore and rebuild academic and social focus. Staged responses are implemented in addressing ongoing behavioural issues, and suspension from school is viewed as a last resort.

The school places an emphasis on 100% attendance, and has in place attendance targets. Attendance is monitored throughout the day, and student absences are followed up by our leadership team. (Refer to our Attendance Policy).

The school values parent/carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion survey, and from parent representatives on School Council. The School Council provides financial assistance and encouragement to the Parents' Fundraising Association in our efforts to build a sense of community.

2. School vision and values and 7 Habits

Our school vision, to which we are committed, is 'improving the outcomes for every child, every day'.

Bridgewood Primary School's core values are respect, courage and honesty:

Respect - for self, learning, family, community, property and environment

Courage - in accepting challenges, 'having a go', taking measured risks in learning and social interactions and seeking and taking advantage of opportunities

Honesty - to oneself in reflection and to others in the telling of truths

The 7 Habits of Happy Kids (and Effective People and Happy Families) are modelled, taught and utilised at Bridgewood every day. 'Leader In Me' or LIM (Franklin Covey) is a flagship program within the school supporting a positive and inclusive community culture which supports the development of our core values and more specifically, the 7 Habits:

Habit 1: Be Proactive - You're in Charge

I am responsible, take initiative and choose my own actions. I do not blame others for my actions. I do the right thing without being asked, even when no-one is looking.

Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind - Have a Plan

I plan ahead and set goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my learning community and school and look for ways to be a good community member.

Habit 3: Put First Things First - Work First, Then Play

I spend my time on things that are most important. This means I say no to things I know I should not do. I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan. I am disciplined and organised.

Habit 4: Think Win-Win - Everyone Can Win

I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want. I am appreciative and look for things for which to be grateful. When conflicts arise, I look for third alternatives.

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand Then to Be Understood - Listen Before You Talk

I listen to other people's ideas and feelings. I try to see things from their points of view. I listen to others without interrupting. I am confident in voicing my ideas. I look people in the eyes when talking.

Habit 6: Synergise - Together is Better

I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, including people who are different from me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems because I know that by teaming with others we can create better solutions than anyone of us can alone. I am humble.

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw - Balance Feels Best

I take care of my body by eating right, exercising and getting sleep. I spend time with family and friends. I learn in lots of ways and in lots of places, not just at school. I find meaningful ways to help others.

Teaching the 7 Habits to the children at Bridgewood sets them up to lead successful happy lives in which they can make positive choices, set goals and achieve them and maintain a healthy work/life balance. It can positively impact academic and emotional outcomes and is aligned with our vision of improving outcomes for every child every day.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Bridgewood Primary School has a comprehensive wellbeing program with a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school.

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, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data*
- *deliver a broad curriculum including specialist programs (eg. physical education, art, music, Chinese, STEM)*
- *teachers at Bridgewood Primary School use our Bridgewood Instructional Model emphasising a Gradual Release of Responsibility and three-tiered intervention approach, as well as agreed team planning documentation to ensure a high quality of differentiated teaching and learning*
- *teachers at Bridgewood 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's Values, Expectations and 7 Habits are incorporated 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, including collaborative work with the Bridgewood kindergarten and close liaison with Officer Secondary College*
- *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 the Student Lighthouse Team and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their mentor teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- all students are welcome to approach mentor teachers, Learning Community Leaders, or Principal Class if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind
- short term or long term wellbeing support can be provided through referral to the Wellbeing Leadership Team
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Leader in Me
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Zones of regulation
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. clubs and lunchtime activities)

Targeted

- each learning community has a Learning Community Leader, who refer wellbeing concerns to the SIT or Wellbeing Leadership Team for students to receive additional supports
- 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
- Koorie students are invited to attend network meetings with Koorie students from other schools, and local events for Indigenous families
- our English as an additional language students through tier 1 and 2 interventions as appropriate, and all cultural 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 LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- 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
- 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](#)
- tier 2 social skill support groups offered as appropriate (eg. Revved Up Boys, MPower Girls and African Drumming for Social Connectivity and Mindfulness)

Individual

Bridgewood 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 students and their parent/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*
- *referring the student (and/or family) to:*
 - *school-based wellbeing supports*
 - *Student Support Services*
 - *Appropriate external supports such as Monash Community Health, Early in Life Mental Health Services (ELMHS), Shire based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Student Attendance Support Program (SASP) or Orange Door*

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*
- *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

Bridgewood Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Wellbeing Leadership Team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and to enhance student wellbeing. Bridgewood 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*
- *Referral Funnel system*

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 inclusive, differentiated environment*
- *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 of students are grounded in the Bridgewood Expectations.

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 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, Bridgewood Primary School will institute a staged response according to our Levels of Consequence; consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. 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 withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response, following Bridgewood's Levels of Consequence, 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:

- *reminding a student that their behaviour is inappropriate and the appropriate Bridgewood Expectation they need to follow*
- *refocusing a student; a teacher controlled consequence such as moving a student within the learning space or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour*
- *relocating a student to another learning space*
- *removal from the learning community and referred to the Principal Class*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *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 Bridgewood 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

Bridgewood 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.

8. Evaluation

Bridgewood 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
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Bridgewood 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
- 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 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 and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2023
Consultation	Consultation via school council, website and circulation to families
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date 2 year cycle	Before November 2025