



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Edgars Creek Primary School on 03 9407 7100

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.

Edgars Creek 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.

POLICY

1. School profile

Edgars Creek Primary School was established in 2021 and is located approximately 45 kilometres north of Melbourne. We have 706 students enrolled from Year Prep to Year 6 with the majority of students in Prep. There are 10 staff, including classroom and specialist teachers, administrative support and a first aid officer.

Our school is located within the community learning hub adjacent to pre-school and secondary school facilities. We are surrounded by a supportive community. Many students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. Edgars Creek Primary School has developed close ties to the local community, and enjoys support from our local shops and community services and the City of Whittlesea. Our school is culturally diverse with 85% of families having a language background other than English (LOTE), with the largest

LOTE group being Indian. The school also has representation from many other cultures from around the world. We are proud of our diversity and value our inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a positive, vibrant and inspiring learning environment, where students are the centre of all we do, valued and encouraged to become community minded citizens, capable of learning at high levels.

Our school leadership team is conscious of the need to engage students and build a supportive school culture, and will do this through the following initiatives:

- Engaging with local early childhood centres;
- Running information sessions for each year level prior to opening
- Giving students the opportunity to engage and ask questions about the new school via Facebook
- Establishing a friend of the school parenting committee:
- Opening opportunities for parents to provide literacy support.

Considering the school's location in a new estate, the school leadership will develop activities to build local community engagement, including:

- Engaging with local early childhood centres
- Establishing a friend of the school parenting committee
- Opening opportunities for parents to provide literacy support
- Social events being coordinated by the parents committee

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Edgars Creek 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, Courage, Curiosity and Responsibility at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower all students to strive for excellence and become independent lifelong learners.

Our Statement of Values is available online at <https://edgarscreekps.vic.edu.au/>

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Edgars Creek 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 as outlined in the Edgars Creek Primary School Community Code of Conduct <https://edgarscreekps.vic.edu.au/>
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing

- creating a whole school culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive celebrating diversity through whole school events such as Harmony Day.
- 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 Science and Arts Subjects to foster students curiosity and provide programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Edgars Creek Primary School have developed our instructional framework to ensure explicit, common and shared model of instruction are used within all lessons and the incorporation of evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices.
- teachers at Edgars Creek 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 Statement of Values 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
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents including academic excellence awards and value awards
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole- school, cohort and individual level including working with families to support regular school attendance
- students have 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, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- create opportunities for cross-age connections with the children at Ganbu Gulinj Kindergarten and Edgars Creek Secondary College students who are our school neighbours.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, First, Aid Office, 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
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management, anxiety and low self-esteem programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- 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.

Targeted

- each year group has a PLT leader, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students, families and staff who may need additional support
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- 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 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
- 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
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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 undertake professional development in trauma management such as the Berry Street Program.
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Navigator
- Lookout

Edgars Creek 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
- meetings with individual students and their parent/carer 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 adapted to support the student further
- 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 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.

Edgars Creek Primary School will use the following strategies to ensure the student wellbeing needs of all students transferring into Edgars Creek Primary School are supported:

- Students from a government school will have their data automatically transferred via CASES21. See: Policy Advisory Library – Student transfer information.
- Students transferring from non-government schools will have to complete an enrolment form.
- Edgars Creek Primary School will request reports and a transition statement from the previous school/s including information on any foreseeable risks.
- Students transferring from existing schools will attend a transition session specific to their year level. If required, interviews with prospective students and families will be held to understand student needs and to support transition. This may also include working with the student's previous school (government or non government) and establishing a Student Support Group.

Specific processes will be in place to assist the transition of all students from Prep to Grade 6 in commencing at our school.

Students transitioning to Prep

Student Transition Statements completed by kindergartens and families will be received via the Insight Platform or email. These statements will be distributed electronically to teaching staff to inform them of student information and needs.

Family Information Sessions

Sessions will be held for new families to the school to share important information about school organisation, processes and curriculum.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Edgars Creek 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 which help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Edgars Creek 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
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- survey data, ie AECD

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. This is reflected in our Edgars Creek Primary School Community Code of Conduct and with our school's 2 rights and 2 responsibilities which are dominant in our school environment.

The Right to be Safe

Everyone has the right to feel safe and comfortable at school.

The Right to Learn

Everybody has the right to learn as much as possible.

Personal Responsibility

I do the right thing.

Communal Responsibility

I encourage others to do the right thing.

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 strongly encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

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

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Edgars Creek Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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
- opportunities to reflect on their behaviour with the support of staff if necessary
- 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 PLT leader and/or Principal Team
- restorative practices

- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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.

Further information is also available at:

- Procedure for Suspension
- Information for Parent and Carers about Expulsions

As per Department policy, all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21

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

7. Engaging with families

Edgars Creek 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.
- utilising Compass and the school newsletter to keep families informed about the school
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- celebrating classroom learning opportunities with families through the Sentral App.
- 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

Edgars Creek 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
- student focus groups (where relevant)
- incidents data as recorded on Compass

- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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 last reviewed:	August 2023
Consultation:	Ongoing Consultation – available via school website.
Approved by:	Ann Turner-Calleri - Principal
Next scheduled review date:	August 2026

