



# Bentleigh West Primary School

## STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact:

**Tanya Elliott - [tanya.elliott@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:tanya.elliott@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.

Bentleigh West Primary 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

Bentleigh West Primary School (BWPS or School) has:

- A commitment to student safety in all school environments with zero tolerance to child abuse.

- Established teaching teams that construct a learning environment where students learn and feel valued.
- Developed expectations that all students can learn.

BWPS responds to the needs and expectations of the community by providing evidence based educational programs that ensure all students learn. The School actively builds strong relationships, as parents are vital partners in the educational process. BWPS invites active participation in the school; examples being School Council, Sub Committees and Parents & Friends.

The School believes all students need to feel increasingly connected locally, nationally and globally and see education as their intellectual right and most powerful vehicle to positively contribute to the wider community.

Bentleigh West Primary School is located 15 km from the CBD in the South Eastern bayside suburbs, in the City of Glen Eira. It is bordered by Nepean Highway, South Road, Jasper Road and North Road, giving it a well-defined and discrete catchment area. The majority of children are 'local' and within either walking distance or a short car drive to the school. Enrolments are mainly drawn from five local Child Care and Kindergarten centres - Bentleigh West, Roseberry House, Bentleigh, McKinnon and Caulfield South. Neighbouring schools are Gardenvale, Ormond, McKinnon, Tucker Rd P.S. St. Finbars and St Pauls. Grade 6 children feed into McKinnon S.C., Brighton S.C., Bentleigh S.C. and a variety of independent schools.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

BWPS actively lives six values:

- **Care** - Caring for self and showing interest in, concern for and caring of others.
- **Respect** - Treating others with consideration and regard.
- **Positivity** - Approaching tasks with optimism and being enthusiastic about the future. Being resilient and focusing on improvement rather than blame.
- **Persistence** - Striving for personal best; accepting challenges and trying hard and not giving up easily.
- **Responsibility** - Personal, Social, Civic and Environmental. Responsibility for one's own actions; responsibility for the way in which one interacts and cooperates with others especially for resolving differences in constructive and peaceful ways; responsibility for one's role in contribution to society and responsibility for one's role in the maintenance and preservation of the environment.
- **Resilience** - You are able to bounce back and adapt to change and be better for the experience.

Team planning and targeted teaching across the School maximises opportunities for student and teacher relationships to support student learning and wellbeing. BWPS provides a strong framework for a safe and nurturing environment through the following:

- The School's values;
- Evidence based practice, shared protocols and norms;
- A commitment to relationship building throughout the School via positive behaviour and restorative practice philosophies.

BWPS links with the community to provide a range of extra-curricular activities and leadership opportunities for students and encourages outstanding performances in the areas of leadership, academic achievement, sport, and the Arts.

A whole school approach to outdoor education, swimming and bike education help support the provision of a breadth of opportunity for all students. Through the Student Representative Council (SRC) students are actively engaged in decision-making within the school community and the School places high value on the expertise of our teachers and the role of parents as partners in learning.

The School's agreed set of values is central to all policy and decision-making. These values give emphasis to the co-operative and caring nature of the school's ethos and promote recognition of a positive and persistent attitude and a strong sense of responsibility and respect for all.

### **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Bentleigh West Primary School has developed 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.

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
- teachers at Bentleigh West Primary School use an Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) model framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Bentleigh West 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
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- 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
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy 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

- 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 Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, 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
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, First Aid Officer, Year Group Leaders, 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
  - buddy 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 Year Group Leader, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- 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 - refer to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan for further information
- 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 [Disability Inclusion Program](#), 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

Bentleigh West Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These 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

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.

The School actively seeks to promote a positive school culture through the initiation of whole School programs that promote our strong value structure. The School is committed to developing students that demonstrate international mindedness, tolerance and care for themselves, for others and their environment.

The foundation of our positive School culture is the deep engagement of students with the curriculum and active participation of all members of the school community toward successful student outcomes. Bentleigh West Primary School has a celebrated history of home/school partnerships which has always strengthened and aligned our approach to supporting student development.

A whole School approach to leadership development provides all students with opportunities to take on responsibilities and act as role models for younger students across the School.

The Student Leaders take a leadership role in the wider community through the promotion of a 'Sustainable Future'. They achieve this through deep learning of science and humanities and linking with sister schools and sustainable projects to help understand application of knowledge. Students understand that education is a pathway to have a positive influence.

Bentleigh West Primary School also implements the Friendship Saver and the Respectful Relationships programs. Both these programs act to promote partnerships between older and younger students as well as a sense of responsibility and role modelling Bentleigh West Primary School's values. It promotes positive interactions through care for all students.

Bentleigh West Primary School encourage active support from the parent community and uses School Council, Parent and Friends and Parent Representatives as avenues of feedback and connection throughout the school. This ensures strong communication and governance.

#### **4. Identifying students in need of support**

Bentleigh West 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, help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Bentleigh West Primary School utilises 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

#### **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 of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

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, Bentleigh West Primary School will institute a staged response, 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 detention, 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
- 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 and Training.

The Principal of Bentleigh West Primary 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**

Bentleigh West 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
- 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**

Bentleigh West 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

Bentleigh West 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.

## **Communications**

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 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/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](#)
- [Disability Inclusion Profile](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy can be found on our school website [BWPS Policies](#)

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

### Policy Review And Approval

Policy last reviewed	June 2022
Consultation	School Council 23 June 2022 Newsletter 24 June 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2024