



# Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy 2018

## **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.

Grovedale 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 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:

Grovedale Primary School is located 7km from the centre of Geelong just off the Surfcoast Highway The school was established in 1854 and has seen different sites and upgrades over that time.

All buildings have been rebuilt and refurbished and in recent years we have had a large injection of funds to upgrade our internal facilities as well as outside. The school currently houses 11 classes in permanent classrooms with expansive grounds and gardens. The ICT equipment has been updated throughout the school to respond to emerging technological initiatives, including the purchase of a bank of 20 iPad minis and touch screen laptops, the replacement of Interactive Whiteboards's to TV screens, which we continue to update at intervals to ensure the most up to date equipment is available for teachers and students.

Over the life of the Strategic Plan we have had fluctuating enrolments from 235 to 275. In 2018 we have 255 students currently enrolled. This is due to many families moving out of the area into more aspirational suburbs or larger land plots, although new housing estates in Marshall and Warraililly should have a positive impact on future enrolments. In 2018 a new state school, Armstrong Creek School, opened. This new school took a large area of our catchment zone however we have not seen a huge impact on enrolments as yet. This may change in the future. Many of the surrounding houses have been deemed public housing and we have 38% of families receiving CSEF. Our SFO is 0.52. This continues to

have an impact on our clientele of the school and led to some behavioural issues over the life of the current strategic plan. Our EAL enrolment has remained relatively stable at 5%. Currently we have 4% of our school population of Koorie descent.

A strong sense of community exists within the school with parents, staff and students working closely together in many contexts. Parents are involved in a wide range of school operations and activities however we do seem to see the same group of parents participating and contributing. An open door policy encourages parents to be greatly involved in the school on a day to day basis. Parent information sessions, school family activities, Learning Expos and special days are all strongly supported by families. The biennial Twilight Fair is a great success with an average of \$11,000 being raised each fair. On the alternate year, we hold a whole school concert in Term 3.

Grovedale Primary is a school that is strongly committed to the provision of a wide range of learning experiences for all students which endeavour to maximise their potential. There has been a strong emphasis on continuous improvement of teacher skills and knowledge in the area of teaching and learning with many new practices and pedagogies being implemented and existing ones strengthened. Extensive work has been done in the planning and delivery of quality teaching and learning practices in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Inquiry learning with an incorporated focus on ICT. In 2016 we introduced the subjects of Digital Technologies and Science with 6 months being spent on each area. We then progressed to STEM as a specialist area in 2018.

Our school vision is "To provide a dynamic learning environment. We are a community of learners who value each other and strive to be the best we can." Grovedale Primary School is committed to continuous improvement and achieving excellence in teaching and learning at every level. We strive for high academic achievement in Maths and English and we provide quality learning programs in all other Victorian Curriculum learning areas. Our programs are designed to cater for the individual needs of a diverse range of students. This includes a variety of support programs across the school. An emphasis upon an inquiry based model and a strong commitment to the development and integration of Information and Communication Technologies across the curriculum further combine to provide an exciting and flexible learning program designed to meet students' individual needs. The use of iPads has been a positive for student engagement.

All classes and teachers use Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and learning goals so that students are aware of their learning and can take some responsibility. All teachers took part in coaching from a school based and funded Teaching and Learning Coach throughout 2014-2016. In 2016 we introduced Classroom Instruction That Works as professional development for all staff across the school and have a Community of Practice with 3 other neighbouring schools. Once per term all teachers across the four schools meet for a combined staff meeting where strategies and knowledge is shared. At the start of each year we combine schools for a common curriculum day to focus staff on the 9 effective teaching strategies. These strategies marry well with the High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) which were introduced to schools by DET in 2017.

There are strong partnerships between parents and staff, with a high level of parent participation on School Council, as classroom helpers, in student-led conferences and in fundraising and social activities. Grovedale Primary School offers its 255 students an attractive, safe and stimulating learning environment and offers an After School Program run by Extend each afternoon. In 2018 the school has 18.9 equivalent full time staff: 2 Principal class, 11.4 teachers and 5.48 Education Support Staff. We have seen relatively stable enrolments over the life of this strategic plan. In 2015 we had 235 students, 2016 we had 236, in 2017 we had 275 and in 2018 we had 255. In 2016 construction commenced on a new school in the Warrilly area which was originally part of our catchment area. The new school was opened in 2018 with a small loss of our existing students however it may impact our enrolments in the future. The new Armstrong Creek School is a combined special needs school with mainstream. The SFO has also remained relatively stable with a range from 0.5217 to 0.5278 in 2018. We have seen an increase of EAL students over the time of this plan, and now we receive some Refugee and

Asylum Seeker Wellbeing Supplement funding. It has been great to see a more multicultural community developing and for our students to be accepting of different races and cultures. At the end of 2014 we signed a memorandum of understanding with a primary school in China. Our sister school has been sending groups of students to our school in July each year and this has certainly added to the diversity and acceptance of various cultures. Families within our school host the students for the week they are here and all the students value the sharing of our culture with others. Our hope is to send some of our students to China in the near future.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision:

### **Mission:**

We are a community of learners where every child is provided with opportunities to develop academic, social, emotional and physical skills to achieve their potential.

### **Vision:**

"To provide a dynamic learning environment. We are a community of learners who value each other and strive to be the best we can."

### **Values:**

Respect. Responsibility. Safety.

## 3. Engagement strategies

*Grovedale 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*
- *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*
- *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 to ensure that students are able to engage in subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers at Grovedale Primary School use the Victorian Curriculum, High Impact Teaching Strategies and Classroom Instruction That Works 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 Grovedale 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, such as, Come to School visits for kindergarten students in terms 2 and 3, and a comprehensive transition program into prep and year 7 in term 4*
- *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 are encouraged to speak with their teachers, Wellbeing Officer, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school special events, buddies, sporting events and celebrations*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Officer, 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:*
  - *School Wide Positive Behaviour Support*
  - *Kidsmatter*
  - *The Resilience Project*
  - *Bully Stoppers*
  - *Safe Schools*
  - *eSmart*
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management program and special needs)*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*
- *buddy programs, peers support programs*

#### Targeted

- *each year group has a Team Leader, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *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*
- *Example School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan*
- *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*

#### Individual

- *Student Support Groups, see:*  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.asp>  
[X](#)
- *Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Wellbeing Officer and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Lookout*

*Grovedale 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 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 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.*

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

*Grovedale Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing Officer plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Grovedale 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*

#### 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, 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.

#### 6. Student behavioural expectations

*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 Grovedale Primary School's Bullying policy.*

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Grovedale 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*
- *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 reviews*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

#### 7. Engaging with families

Grovedale 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

Grovedale 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
- SOCS

#### **Further Information and Resources:**

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safe Standards
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Duty of Care Policy
- Curriculum Policy

This policy was ratified by School Council in **March 2018** and is scheduled for review in **March 2021**.