



Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Avondale Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

Avondale Primary school's approach to creating and maintaining a child safe school environment is guided by our school philosophy and values. At Avondale Primary School our vision is 'to create a community that strives for excellence through high quality learning, engagement and wellbeing for all.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 9318 1755

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour

Avondale 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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SCHOOL PROFILE

Avondale Primary School is located in Avondale Heights, situated 12 kilometres north-west of Melbourne's CBD. The school opened in 1961 with enrolments progressively increasing to the current 2022 figure of 443 students with approximately 25% of students speaking a language other than English at home.

Avondale Primary School; a community that strives for excellence through high quality learning, engagement and wellbeing is our School Vision. We promote an inclusive environment in which every student feels safe, happy, engaged and motivated to excel in their learning. The Victorian Curriculum underpins student learning, engagement and wellbeing and is the focus of our PLCs. Our PLCs plan consistent, rigorous student learning experiences using data to drive this planning. This year has seen the implementation of Respectful Relationships across the school and the continued focus on ensuring a Child Safe and positive and environment through School Wide Positive Behaviours approach.

At Avondale Primary School, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are supported by the School Improvement Team. Specialist classes include LOTE (Italian), Physical Education and The Arts (Visual & Performing). We value the expertise and experience all staff members bring to our school. We are committed to their development with Professional Learning offered in student achievement, wellbeing, engagement and leadership. Staff are provided with opportunities to participate in peer observation, mentoring and induction programs. We encourage and promote lifelong learning through student voice and agency.

We are an accredited school under DET's International Student Program and implement the Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan to support the engagement, attendance, wellbeing and achievement of our Koorie learners.

Avondale Primary School acknowledges the importance of strong relationships with families and the broader school community and their value as partners in learning. We have an active School Council that meets eight times each year, supported by a number of sub committees, including Finance and Education. Parents and carers are encouraged to participate in school governance and policy development.

SCHOOL VALUES, PHILOSOPHY & VISION

Avondale 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. We are committed to providing a safe, secure and consistent learning environment for all students. Students, staff and members of our



school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults. The staff at Avondale Primary School work collectively to ensure that students feel valued, cared for and have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school. Staff work to effectively engage students with their learning and to reach their educational potential.

Our *Statement of Values* is available online at <http://www.avondaleps.vic.edu.au/page/9/Policies>

Avondale Primary School is a learning community that seeks to maximise student learning potential and actively promotes an enthusiasm for learning. We aim to develop students academically, physically, socially and emotionally, and acknowledge that wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

At Avondale Primary School we are in the process of reviewing our values with the community. The current values are:

- *Respect*
- *Honesty*
- *Persistence*
- *Integrity*
- *Cooperation*
- *Self confidence*
- *Caring for others*
- *Helpfulness*

Avondale Primary School supports student engagement and encourages positive behaviour, attendance and participation in all areas of the curriculum.

Our guiding principles are that:

- all members of the school community (students, staff and parents) have rights and responsibilities
- all members of the school community are valued and should be treated with respect
- all students have a right to access all of the curriculum and to use the resources, regardless of gender, culture, disability or socio-economic status
- all students are responsible and accountable for their choice of behaviour
- students learn best when they have a strong sense of belonging to the school
- students learn and play best in a secure and safe environment free from intimidation, harassment, bullying or violence
- staff implement fair and consistent rules and consequences negotiated with students
- staff implement effective student management strategies and reinforce positive behaviour
- teachers, including visiting and replacement teachers, should expect to work in a safe and cooperative environment
- parents will work in partnership with the school to maintain a productive and safe teaching and learning environment
- the principal and staff have an obligation to be fair, reasonable, consistent and act in accordance with DET regulations.

This policy reflects this school's community aspirations, Ministerial Order 625, the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic) and the Education Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013.



WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Avondale Primary School has developed a range of strategies to support and 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 level specific) and individual engagement strategies includes:

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 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, student 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 participate in subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Avondale Primary School use theory based instructional frameworks 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 Avondale 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 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
- 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 in the newsletter and on the school website
- 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.
- students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Student Wellbeing Coordinator/ Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through transition activities, athletics/sports days, action teams, student led clubs, and peer support/buddy programs



- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, First Aid Officer, PLC 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:
 - Bully Stoppers/ Bullying No Way
 - School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)
 - Respectful Relationships
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management, anxiety 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 cohort has a PLC Leader, a teacher responsible for their year level, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts 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 Koorie Education Policy 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 including through
- 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
- 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](#)
- The Student Wellbeing Coordinator will consult with the Principal and leadership team to identify additional professional development and training that may be required for staff to support the additional needs of students ie., academic achievement, specialised needs and mental health.
- South Western Region and Student Support Services will be contacted when additional training or support is required to assist teachers of students with additional needs.
- Student Support Groups, see:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroup.s.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plans
- Referrals for PSD application assessments will be made to Assessments Australia for Cognitive and Severe Language Disorder.
- Referrals for other PSD categories ie ASD, Physical, Vision, Hearing or Severe Behaviour Disorder are referred to Student Support Services through Student Online Case System (SOCS)
- Mandatory reporting of any child abuse or concerns re neglect will be referred to DFFH.
- If the child is not deemed at high risk these cases may then be referred to Child First
- Lookout (DET) will assist with students at Avondale Primary School living in Out of Home School Care

Individual

- 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 Child First
 - Re-engagement programs with DET

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 Education Support Officers
- 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.

IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

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

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:

- actively participate in their educational program
- display and model 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.



STUDENT BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families 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, Avondale 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 implement 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 PLC team leader
- 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 Avondale Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.



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

ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES

Avondale 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/carers and families 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.
- conducting effective school-to-home communication, through newsletters, Compass, letters/notes and the school website
- providing parent volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers to participate in school related 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

EVALUATION

Avondale 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

Avondale 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 and staff training
- accessible to staff on Compass and discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- included as an annual reference in our school newsletter
- hard copy available from school administration upon request

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STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



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 last reviewed	14 th June 2022
Consultation	School Council: 14 th June 2022 School Staff: 6 th June 2022
Approved by	Principal: Jill Benham
Next scheduled review date	June 2024