

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Sale Primary School on 03 5144 5545 or Sale.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.

Sale 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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POLICY

1. School profile

Sale Primary School is based in the town of Sale, Gippsland, 200kms east of Melbourne, on the lands of the Brayakooloong clan of the Gunai/Kurnai nation. Known locally as 545, the school was established in 1853 and has occupied its current site adjoining historic Victoria Park near the city centre since 1883. The school continues to draw pupils from the city itself and from outlying areas including the R.A.A.F. Base at East Sale and currently has an enrolment of approximately 480 students.



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545 prides itself on being a supportive, friendly and caring school. We have a happy, relaxed community atmosphere that fosters a strong and active partnership between students, staff, parents and the local community. The traditional Maypole Dance, performed each year since 1893 by senior pupils at the annual Garden Party, symbolises the link between our school and the community that has developed over a number of generations. The warm feeling of "belonging to 545" is evident in the children, parents and teachers working cooperatively in the education of our children.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

The philosophy of the school underpins all school operations and curriculum. It is encapsulated by the school motto, **"Maximising growth in the whole child – academically, socially and emotionally"**.

The Sale Primary School No '545' endeavours to create a nurturing, caring learning environment for our students, which seeks to foster a pride and joy in school and in life-long learning, and to prepare students as well rounded and valuable contributors to the community in which they live.

Sale Primary School's Statement of Values 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, Learning and Belonging**

Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available on our school website.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Sale 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, and 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

We are working to create a positive and engaging climate for learning by:

- **Implementing the following whole school pro-social and wellbeing programs:**
 - School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
 - The Respectful Relationships Initiative
- **Building a safe and supportive school environment where staff will work to:**
 - Prioritising positive relationships between staff and students
 - using an instructional 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
 - carefully planned transition programs
 - creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
 - embedding culturally inclusive and safe practices across our school
 - ensure 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.



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- **Proactively engaging with all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning by:**
 - creating an environment where parents/carers feel valued
 - effective communication
 - providing volunteering opportunities
 - involving families in school decision making
- **Encouraging student voice and agency by:**
 - Allowing students to have a voice in the classroom and be involved in their own learning – in what they learn and how that will be assessed.
 - all students are welcome to self-refer to a member of the Wellbeing Team, 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
 - create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through, athletics, swimming, music and choir programs and buddy programs.
- **Monitor, analyse and respond to a range of school data such as:**
 - attendance,
 - attitudes to School Survey,
 - parent survey data,
 - student management data and
 - school level assessment data

Targeted

We are working to ensure we identify students and cohorts that need extra engagement and wellbeing assistance is proactively in place.

- **We are identifying these students and cohorts using a range of school data such as:**
 - attendance,
 - attitudes to School Survey,
 - parent survey data,
 - student management data and
 - school level assessment data
 - teacher/staff observations
- **We will support targeted groups of students through activities such as:**
 - Wellbeing programs
 - our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program
 - 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
 - we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through ensuring increased monitoring of engagement and attendance and tailoring individual support as needed.
- **Sale Primary School employs a Defence Support Mentor (DSM). The DSM is responsible for monitoring any students who have parents in the Defence force, providing as extra school-based assistance as deemed necessary.**



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Individual

We are working to ensure we identify individual students that need extra engagement and wellbeing assistance is proactively in place.

- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on Student Support including promoting LGBTIQ+ inclusion using Safe Schools promotional material and implementing the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships.
- 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](#) developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan for student identified
- 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 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 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

Sale 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. Sale 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



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- 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 Values of **Respect, Learning and Belonging***

Sale Primary School implement School Wide Positive Behaviour Support as model for managing and responding to any anti-social behaviours, as well as a model to teach the behaviours that we would like to see. These values will be displayed in all areas of the school and be made language appropriate to reflect the age of the students in the classroom and the environment in which they are being taught. It is also expected that these values will be shared with the broader school community at assemblies, information sessions and in Newline articles.

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.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, we 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



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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 a member of the school leadership team
- 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 Sale 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

Sale 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.

Sale Primary School seeks to provide an inviting environment for members of our school community, to foster a connection with the school.

We do this through focusing on the following:

- encouraging parent participation in school based organisations such as Parents and Friends Club and School Council, which foster relationships with other members of the school community
- providing opportunities for parents to participate in their child's education at school through a range of classroom, sporting, and cultural activities or assisting in special programs
- having the school involved in a range of community based activities

Ensuring that open and effective communication channels are provided, allowing the school community to access school leadership personnel.

8. Evaluation

Sale 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:



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- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Sale 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:

- included in staff induction processes
- included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ 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



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POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2024
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	November 2026