



# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY



**Help for non-English speakers**  
If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the Office

## 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.

Swan Hill 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.

## 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
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Swan Hill Primary School is a coeducational government school, providing active and innovative education from Prep (Foundation) to Year 6. We pride ourselves on **Achieving Success Together, with our outstanding learning opportunities that are inclusive of everyone.**

Our extensive landscaped grounds (4.4 hectares) allows students to have ample space to play and interact with each other in different environments, including grassed and paved playing areas, a large oval, basketball and netball courts, adventure playgrounds, plenty of tree-shaded areas and a central courtyard reserved for quiet activities. Facilities include Music, Art, Indonesian and Science & Technology rooms, an Open Learning Centre, Gymnasium, Library, Wellbeing Kitchen and Canteen.

Swan Hill Primary School has approximately 519 students who come from a wide range of backgrounds, including approximately 73 Koorie students and 38 students from Non-English-speaking backgrounds. Our school runs 24 straight grade classes with an average of 22 students per class. Students are given the opportunity to broaden their experiences and be challenged in a variety of ways through the provision of an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and programs. We develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners through a diverse curriculum program, including Specialist subjects like Science, Music, Digital Technologies, Indonesian, Art/Library and Mental Health. Our students are also offered swimming lessons through our unique Physical Education sessions.

Swan Hill Primary School has a dynamic, dedicated and innovative staff team and a positive work culture. Swan Hill Primary School offers a comprehensive curriculum and supports all students with a highly regarded wellbeing program. Our Leadership Team consists of a Principal, Assistant Principal and four Leading Teachers (three Sub-school Leaders and one Disability Inclusion Wellbeing Leader). The Assistant Principal and Leading Teachers form our Sub-School Leaders who are responsible for assisting teachers in managing students, especially those who may be at risk.

Our staff have a unique reputation in the community for empowering students to reach their learning goals and believe it is important to develop the whole child's physical, social and emotional skills. Our School is a community that reflects diversity, inclusion and student empowerment. Our school culture promotes professional learning for all Teachers, including Education Support staff (ES). We use recent research, as the basis for our teaching and learning curriculum to ensure academic success and life-long learners. High levels of teamwork and cooperation between staff members is a feature of the school, with weekly PLC (professional learning community) year level planning existing as a strong form of support and professional learning for staff. Learning Specialists and Lead Teachers provide high level support for individuals and teams of teachers.

The school is dedicated to a partnership between parents and teachers in the learning process, and an 'open-door' policy encourages parents and friends to become actively involved in the school's programs. We pride ourselves on continuously having high Parent and Staff Opinion survey results, and believe our positive school culture allows both students and staff to flourish!

Swan Hill Primary School is a great place for children, parents and staff. We provide positive educational outcomes for the students so that they can achieve to their full potential and become productive members of the community.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Swan Hill Primary School's vision is '*Achieving Success Together*' acknowledging the following:

Every child is important  
Every staff member an asset  
Every parent a partner in education

Swan Hill Primary School's mission is to provide 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 objective is to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education, which values the skills, interests and abilities of our students. We are committed to providing a Child Safe environment for all students. We are a welcoming school for everyone – regardless of gender, sexuality, cultural background, disability or family circumstances. We believe everyone has the right to a great education.

Swan Hill Primary School's values are Respect, Belonging, Responsibility and Commitment.

**Respect** - I am important and so is everyone else.

**Belonging** - I care for people and they care for me.

**Responsibility** - I am honest and reliable and I own what I do.

**Commitment** - I will do my best to achieve success.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

- implement a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) approach, centred on our values
- display posters and banners that promote values in our school
- celebrate our values in our school newsletter
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- explicitly teach and discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies

## 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Swan Hill 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 (Tier 1)**

- Fortnightly mental health sessions with Mental Health Specialist in every classroom
- Weekly Respectful Relationships lessons
- Koorie and EAL liaison staff
- Breakfast Club
- Karen Young Anxiety Education for all staff and members of the school community
- 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, behaviour, Attitudes to School Survey, staff opinion survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students have subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Teachers at Swan Hill Primary School are working towards a Gradual Release of Responsibility 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
- Teachers at Swan Hill 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 through our SWPBS Matrix 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. Examples of these are Student of the week, Aussie of the month, SWPBS Recognition Tokens
- Utilising a case management approach to monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement practices where required.
- Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council and other forums including Environmental Leaders of the Future (ELFs) and School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) team. Students are also encouraged to speak with their Teachers, Sub-School Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school concert, school fete, athletics, music programs, lunchtime activities, peer mediator programs, buddy grades, celebration days such as National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence and transition activities.
- All students and parents are welcome to seek support from the School Chaplain, Tanya Forrest, Disability Inclusion Wellbeing Leader, Michelle Murphy, Sub-School Leaders, Assistant Principal, Justin Condely and Principal, Hayley Doyle 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.
- Our school has a School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) Team whose purpose is to lead, support and empower the school community in promoting positive outcomes for all.
- We engage in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support with our staff and students, which includes programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

### **Targeted (Tier 2)**

- Each year group has a Sub-School Leader and 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 and our Koorie Educational Support Staff member
- 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

- Tutor Learning Initiative targeting students in Year 1-3 to develop comprehensive literacy and numeracy skills
- School Chaplain, SWPBS team, Disability Inclusion Wellbeing Leader and the Leadership team will undertake health promotion and social skill development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data.
- Relevant teaching staff will apply a trauma-informed approach (using either Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatised Children or Berry St model) to working with students who have experience trauma.

### **Individual (Tier 3)**

- 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
- Student Support Groups (SSGs) will be formed to support any student, at any time a significant issue arises. SSGs will meet once a term for students in Out of Home Care and for students who have been identified through the Disability Inclusion Profile. This group should include the Student, Parent/Caregiver, Classroom Teacher, Sub-School Leader and/or Wellbeing Leader, outside agencies, SSSO
- Disability Inclusion Profile (tier 3)
- 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, yard plans etc.
- Working with allied health professionals to provide classroom support, individual and small group interventions within the school grounds. This includes occupational and speech therapists, physiotherapists and counsellors.
- Referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports – Chaplain, Mental Health Specialist
  - Student Support Services (SSS)
  - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) or Child First/Orange Door

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 to their 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**

Swan Hill Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Leadership Team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and in enhancing student wellbeing.

Swan Hill 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 / Individual Education Plans
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, behaviour and wellbeing data
- engagement with families
- School Chaplain
- Student Support Group meetings
- Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD)

## **5. Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. At Swan Hill Primary School, students can feel safe to talk to a Teacher or staff member. Students can feel confident their issue will be taken seriously and the right support given. 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
- respect the right of others to learn
- treat everyone with respect regardless of their gender, sexuality, cultural background, disability or family circumstances
- not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities
- model positive behaviour to other students
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- comply with and model school values
- follow school expectations (SWPBS Behaviour Matrix)
- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment
- actively participate in school

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 Swan Hill Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community Swan Hill 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 in accordance with the SWPBS Behaviour Continuum. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- referring to the [SWPBS Matrix](#)
- referring to [SWPBS Behaviour Continuum \(Flow Chart\)](#)
- sensory/brain break
- Restorative Practices
- Orange Card- time spent with a Sub-School Leader or teacher at recess/lunch.
- detentions
- referral to the Sub-School Leader
- withdrawal of privileges or development of a yard plan
- develop behaviour support plan
- referral to Student Support Services (SSS)
- behaviour support plan reviews/SSG
- 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

Swan Hill 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 Statement of Values and School Philosophy 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 through School Council, surveys, parent groups, SWPBS parent representative
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students
- Conducting Student Led Conferences through our goal sharing events and platforms
- Using the Seesaw App to share and celebrate student learning goals and achievements
- Using the school's Facebook page to share information with the school community
- Celebrating special events e.g. Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparent's Day where classrooms are open for students to share their work with their families
- Supporting students with athletics days, cross country, swimming carnivals, school concert, book parade, assemblies
- Inviting families to participate in transition programs, information nights/sessions, school fete, canteen duty, Reading Stars Program, Family Nights eg. Science Night

## 8. Evaluation

Staff at Swan Hill Primary School will monitor 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 -ATS, SWPBS
- staff opinion survey
- Sentral incident and wellbeing data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS
- SENTRAL
- SWPBS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)
- SWPBS Self-Assessment Survey (SAS)
- NCCD

Swan Hill 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
- Included in student enrolment packs
- 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:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safe Standards Policy
- Child Safe Reporting Guidelines
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Equal Opportunity

Attachments:

- SWPBS Positive Behaviours Matrix
- SWPBS Behaviour Continuum

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	19/08/2023
Consultation	Staff 20/08/23 Junior School Council School Council 12/09/2023 School community via newsletter 29/08/23
Approved by	Justin Condely, Acting Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2025 (every two years)