



# Koondrook Primary School

## Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

### 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.

Koondrook 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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### POLICY

#### 1. School profile

Koondrook Primary School is situated in the small rural township of Koondrook. Our school is located on Murray Parade, Koondrook, in the Shire of Gannawarra. Situated in a delightful bush setting the school is tucked into a bend of the Murray River.

Koondrook Primary School NO. 2265 was established in 1880 to serve the township of Koondrook and surrounding district. Koondrook Primary school is part of the Murray Plains Cluster of schools. Enrolments are drawn from within the town and the surrounding farming district. A bus service brings students in from outlying areas and the current student population is 94 students.

Koondrook Primary School currently operates five classes (P/1, 1/2, 2/3, 4 and 5/6). The school has a current staffing of six fulltime teachers which includes the principal and two 0.6 teachers, 2 fulltime teacher support, 0.6 teacher support 0.2 teacher support and 0.4 business manager. Koondrook has a range of teaching staff from beginning teachers to experienced staff. The school prides itself on the diverse curriculum offered to all students.

During 2013 we moved into the new school, under the BER umbrella, it is a modern facility with up-to-date technologies, 2 learning areas, a shared project space and an administration and toilet area. In 2015 the increase of student numbers saw the installation of a double portable classroom. We work in flexible learning spaces with the students having the choice of a variety of working spaces within the classrooms. The opportunities provided through this learning environment have resulted in enhanced team teaching and planning, more sophistication in delivering a differentiated curriculum and greater assistance to students at point of need. Koondrook Primary School also has a purpose-built Preschool on site which offers three-year-old and four-year-old Preschool programs. Some of the Preschool students in the area also access Preschool in Kerang and Barham. We have established strong ties with all the Preschool centres. Students exiting Koondrook Primary School attend either, Kerang or Barham Secondary Schools. An outstanding transition program exists to enable smooth transition from Preschool to school, and then on to secondary school and the school liaises closely with all institutions.

We implement the Victorian Curriculum. We offer a full curriculum including English, Mathematics, Humanities - History, Geography, Economics, Civics and Citizenship, The Arts- Visual Art, Science, ICT, Health and Physical Education, Stephanie Alexander Gardening and Cooking Program, as well as MAAC and MARC weekly services

Various means are utilised to communicate with our community. We publish a fortnightly newsletter, have an active school webpage, use our school Facebook page and texting as means to inform and promote school activities and achievements. Local community groups also offer support to the school as gardening and classroom helpers and 'End of Year' awards for our Year 6 students. The school has a strong involvement in many significant community activities.

At Koondrook Primary School we work cooperatively and collaboratively to ensure that the school operates effectively and that its Policies and Programs are relevant and effective. Great emphasis is placed on the development of literate and numerate children who have a real joy for learning. Investigation time promotes the student's curiosity, passions and real-life experiences within their learning and development. In striving for continuous improvement, Koondrook Primary School is committed to maximising the educational opportunities for all students, with staff Professional Learning playing a vital role in achieving this.

The rural atmosphere, smaller student numbers and community involvement contribute to a relaxed friendly environment in which students at all levels are able to receive individual attention and which cross age interaction and leadership qualities are facilitated and developed.

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

The core purpose of Koondrook Primary School is to provide a comprehensive education for all students so as to enable them to reach their academic, social, emotional and physical potential in the digital age.

Koondrook Primary School works towards achieving its purpose by planning and implementing academic, sporting, artistic and social programs that support and enhance the individual and the group:

- We cater for individual differences,
- We strive to bring out the best in every student,
- We ensure teamwork among school council, staff, students and the wider community.
- We value and welcome parent participation.

Koondrook Primary School's Vision is to:

- Provide a supportive, safe and secure learning environment that promotes thinking, creativity and individuality.
- Provide high quality programs that engage our students in their learning and instill the essential skills that will enable them to reach their full potential, supporting and extending them in all forms of academic, social, creative and physical endeavours.
- Create a resilient school community where all students develop independence, emotional intelligence and social competency as they strive to achieve their full potential as 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.
- Provide a stimulating and supportive environment for all teachers; and assist, inform and involve parents and the greater community of Koondrook.

Our community considers the following values as central to the life of our school:

- Respect - Accepting differences and treating yourself and everyone with kindness.
- Responsibility - Making the choices that will lead to positive outcomes.
- Resilience - The ability to cope and bounce back when faced with a challenge.

### 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Koondrook 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
- 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
- teachers at Koondrook Primary School use 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

- teachers at Koondrook 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
- 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, 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, School Nurse, 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
- Engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, including programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - School Wide Positive Behaviours
  - Circle Time
  - Teacher Buddy Activities
  - Zones of Regulation
- Developing programs and incursions to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management/mindfulness programs)
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management 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

- Staff will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their grade, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Staff will seek support from colleagues through the weekly staff meeting student wellbeing focus

- 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 Individual Learning Plans (ILP's) for further information
- 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](#)

### Individual

Koondrook 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
- 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
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

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

Koondrook 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. Koondrook 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, 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/Student code of conduct.

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 Koondrook Primary School and 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, Koondrook 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
- 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 Koondrook 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

Koondrook 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

Koondrook 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

Koondrook 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 – [www.koondrookps.vic.edu.au](http://www.koondrookps.vic.edu.au)
- 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/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:

- 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 June 2022 School Community -website/ newsletter Week 1 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2024