



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING 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.

Willow Grove 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

Willow Grove is a small rural school situated in the Baw Baw Ranges and overlooking the Blue Rock Dam. It is surrounded by the scenic and rich dairying, horticultural and forestry area of West Gippsland. We are very privileged to live and work in this beautiful part of Gippsland.

Our school is proud to be an integral part of the Willow Grove Community and value the support we receive from this family orientated and community focused area. We encourage the support and partnership of parents and recognise that together we have a unique role to play in ensuring that our school continues to be a safe and supportive environment where learning, play and fun are celebrated.

2. School Vision and Values

Willow Grove Primary School's Statement of Vision and Values is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Our school's vision is to create a community of happy, healthy and resilient learners. We embrace challenges in all that we do and have high expectations of ourselves and others.

Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, resilience, teamwork and community at every opportunity.

3. Engagement strategies

Willow Grove 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

At Willow Grove Primary School we promote positive behaviour and inclusion through:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising 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
- teachers at Willow Grove Primary School use a Gradual Release Instructional Model 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 Willow Grove 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
- 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 Leadership Team. 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 and Buddy programs
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Safe Schools and School Wide Positive Behaviour Support.
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs

Targeted

At Willow Grove Primary School we have the following strategies designed to address particular concerns that may affect vulnerable groups within our school community and other student groups (such as friendship circles).

- each year group has a classroom teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students, and act as a point of contact for those who may need additional support
- All Koorie students will have an Individual Learning Plan and be connected 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
- the school chaplain 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

Willow Grove 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
- referring the student to:
 - School Chaplain
 - 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

Willow Grove Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Our school plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Willow Grove 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 any member of school staff.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Vision and Values and are explained in more detail in our school's Behaviour Management Policy. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Willow Grove Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Willow Grove 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.

Detailed disciplinary measures that may be applied are included in Willow Grove Primary school's Behaviour Management Policy.

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

Willow Grove 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
- 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

Willow Grove 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

RELATED STATEMENTS AND POLICIES

- WGPS Statement of Vision and Values
- WGPS Child Safety Policy
- WGPS Bullying Prevention Policy
- WGPS Behaviour Management Policy
- WGPS Individual Learning Plan Policy
- WGPS Inclusion and Diversity Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 10th March 2020 and is scheduled for review in 2023.