



AXEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Excellence Through Endeavour"
No. 1008

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Principal – Corrina Hartland



Respect, Personal Best, Resilience, Cooperation

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the principal; at Axedale Primary School on 03 54397232.

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.

Axedale 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
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
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POLICY

1. School profile

Axedale Primary School is situated 20kms from Bendigo and has served the community for 152 years since opening in 1870. The setting is a rural environment that is safe, attractive and provides a stimulating learning environment.

We are a growing rural school serving a vibrant and caring local community.

Axedale's motto is "Excellence Through Endeavour" and the school aims for this in every respect. The school promotes the values of Respect, Resilience, Personal Best and Co-operation. Students are encouraged and equipped through our broad based curriculum to strive for academic and personal excellence, as well as excellence in values, attitudes and behaviour. Senior students are provided with a range of representative and leadership opportunities involving School and House Captains, Junior School Council, ANZAC Day involvement, School Choir & Rock Band, Regional Sport representation and Axedale-based community events. Axedale Primary aims to foster a culture of contributing to and being involved in, a strong local community. There is a strong partnership between parents and staff with a high level of positive parent participation on School Council, committees, as classroom helpers and social activities.

School values, philosophy and vision

Axedale 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. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, personal best, resilience and co-operation 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.

Our Statement of Values and Philosophy is available online at:

<https://www.axedaleps.vic.edu.au/page/57/School-Policies>

2. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Axedale 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 Axedale 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
- 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 at school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through whole school events and activities, buddy activities and school yard play

- all students are welcome to self-refer to the School Chaplain, 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:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - eSmart
 - The Resilience Project
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. Inclusive Play Space, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy 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 classroom teacher monitors the health and wellbeing of students their class, 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. Strong connections/relationships are established and maintained between parents, carssses, students, and school staff. Regional support, through the KESSO, is sought on a need's basis.
- English as a second language students are supported, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- 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
- all 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

Axedale Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building and maintaining relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- all staff build and maintain a relationship with all students, across all year levels

- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan for students significantly below or above the expected level academically
- developing a Behaviour Support Plan for students who require assistance to increase positive behaviours and / or who display challenging behaviours
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports, including 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 Orange Doo

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
- maintaining regular communication, sharing positive and negative behaviours
- 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.

3. Identifying students in need of support

Axedale Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The principal and School Chaplain play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Axedale 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
- engagement and ongoing communication with families
- observations by and self-reporting / responding to School Chaplain
- expression of concerns from peers

4. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. Axedale Primary School acknowledges that the behaviour of students, staff, parents and carers has an impact on our school community and culture. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity.

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 the school values of respect, personal best, resilience and co-operation, for themselves and in interactions with school community members
- 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 the principal. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

5. Student Behavioural Expectations and Management

Behavioural expectations of students are outlined in the Values and Expected Behaviours Matrix.

[\Behaviour Matrix\Behaviour Matrix 2020.pdf](#)

- *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, Axedale Primary School will implement 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 withdrawal from the school yard, 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
- removal from classroom or school yard
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom, walking with a yard duty teacher, or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- 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 Axedale 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.

6. Engaging with families

Axedale 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 endeavour 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 or through request to the office
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy
- provision of opportunities for families to meet other families ie: family games nights, school concerts, family BBQ nights
- 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, when applicable
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

7. Evaluation

Axedale 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
- Behaviours Logs, include on school digital management system
- incidents data, including those on school digital management system
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Axedale 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 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](#)
- [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	21 st June 2022
Consultation	School Council 21 st June 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2023