



# DUNOLLY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## 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 on 54681111.

### 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.

Dunolly 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

### School profile

Dunolly Primary School is nestled in a peaceful bush setting on the edge of the Dunolly Township in Central Victoria. It has a rich history of involvement in the community, catering for the educational needs of students since 1875.

As the hub of a cluster of rural schools including Bealiba, Talbot, Tarnagulla, Timor and Newstead, it is also attached to the broader Mt Alexander/Goldfields Network. The school serves Dunolly as well as the neighbouring areas of Bet Bet, Betley, Bromley, Eddington, Moliagul and Rheola. A contract bus service covers these districts.

As a member of the Dunolly Cluster, the school participates in combined activities including the Performing Arts Festival, Cross Country Race, Athletic Sports, Swimming and Year Six Transition Days. This sharing of resources and activities provides students with a broad range of educational and cultural experiences.

As a member of the Central Goldfields Cluster, Dunolly Primary School participates in Professional Development Programs most recently Fountas & Pinnell Reading program, Science of Reading, extensive maths work with Rob Vingerhoets and Berry Street Trauma Informed Practice. Our school has a particular emphasis on Literacy, Numeracy and wellbeing. Staff are involved in Professional Development to improve outcomes through quality teaching and learning in their classrooms. Quality teaching and learning programs provide opportunities for all students to reach their highest potential. We are committed to providing a caring, supportive and educationally challenging environment.

The current enrolment for 2023 is 79 students. Four classroom teachers operate the multi-aged classrooms. Specialist programs are Auslan, Science, Library and the Arts. I.C.T. is a high priority within our curriculum and all classes have access to laptops and iPads. We have an emphasis on healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle with the physical education program a priority in the school.

Specialized programs include:

Literacy Support – MULTILIT, MINILIT, Oral Language Program

Emu Maths

Performing Arts

Bike Education

Camps for Years 3 to 6

A school based welfare program

Mother Goose

Extensive Kinder/Prep transition program

Dunolly Primary School has excellent facilities including:

A comprehensive, automated library in an aesthetically appealing mud brick structure with a reading courtyard

A multi-purpose centre for assemblies, music and various programs

An extensive well-organised playground

Adventure equipment with shade cover especially set aside for junior students

Bright open learning spaces

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in school activities. This involvement and support enriches many aspects of students' education and well-being. Classroom teachers highly value the assistance given on a daily basis.

Contributions made by members of School Council and Parents & Friends Association through development and maintenance of facilities and fundraising, help provide an excellent environment for the broader school community.

## 1. School values, philosophy and vision

Dunolly 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, resilience, community and achievement at every opportunity.

Our vision is to prepare young people to be engaged, responsible and resilient citizens of the local and global community. We aim to prepare students to contend with a very dynamic 21st century in which creativity, cooperative work, connectedness to the world and adaptability are key features. The school aspires to provide a contemporary approach to teaching and learning in a purposeful learning environment.

### Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Dunolly 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 (Compass) and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum including Science, Music, Library, Art, Physical Education and LOTE (Auslan) to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Dunolly Primary School use The 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 and HITS are incorporated into all lessons.
- Teachers have a high level of understanding of Cognitive Load Theory and how it impacts learning and instruction.
- teachers at Dunolly 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 and extensive transition programs into Prep and Secondary School to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, yard, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents through the use of SWPBS integrated into all areas of our school
- 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 Voice Council and other forums including daily classroom check ins and surveys. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Wellbeing Coordinator and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through regular House group activities, the Buddies program, PLAY program, athletics, music programs and whole school activities and excursions
- all students are welcome to refer to the Wellbeing Coordinator, Principal or school counsellor 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
  - SWPBS
  - The Resilience Project
  - Berry Street Education Model
  - LASER leadership program

- PLAY leadership program
- Buddies program
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. links to local sports teams, clubs and community groups and 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 class is encouraged to seek support from classroom teachers, Wellbeing Coordinator who monitor the health and wellbeing of students, and act 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 – refer to our [DPS Aboriginal Learning Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan 2023.docx](#) for further information
- 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
- 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

### Individual

Dunolly 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
- determining a Learning Mentor for students at risk or students who are vulnerable
- 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
  - our School Counsellor
  - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, SHAPE (attendance program), 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 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.

## 2. Identifying students in need of support

Dunolly 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. Dunolly 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 and analysis of data 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
- staff or parent referral to School Counsellor

## 3. 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
- freely 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.

#### 4. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and 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 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, Dunolly 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 implement positive and non-punitive interventions, such as following SWPBS matrixes and behaviour promotion policy to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as 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
- referral to Wellbeing Coordinator or Principal
- restorative practices
- timeouts at lunch time
- 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 Dunolly 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.

## 5. Engaging with families

Dunolly 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, Compass or obtaining a hard copy
- 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.
- conducting Family Fun nights/days which allow parents an opportunity to be part of student learning
- regular updates and pictures of student learning through posts on Compass and SeeSaw

## 6. Evaluation

Dunolly 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 (Compass)
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data



- SOCS
- Classroom teacher and staff observations

Dunolly 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 either as a targeted or whole school approach

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website and Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- 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 and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Behaviour Promotion Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2023
Consultation	School Council- February 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2025

