

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.

Riverbend 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

Riverbend Primary School is located at the intersection of Communal Road and Tathra Road in Wyndham Vale, 40kms from Melbourne, in the rapidly growing City of



Wyndham. Riverbend Primary School opened in 2021. The school consists of three learning neighbourhoods, an administration building, outdoor play courts, a performing arts and physical education building and a sports field.

All schools must make reasonable adjustments to ensure all students have the same learning opportunities as each other.

Inclusive education is demonstrated in environments that adapt the following elements:

- design and physical structures,
- teaching methods, and curriculum, as well as the culture and
- policy and practice of education environments so that they are accessible to all students without discrimination.

Riverbend Primary School is a supported inclusion school. A supported inclusion school is a mainstream primary school designed to support a higher number of students with a disability than typical mainstream schools. They have facilities that provide additional support for students with a disability, so that all students can use the same learning and play areas.

Additional facilities include sensory areas, accessible play spaces, wider corridors, therapeutic gym equipment and inclusive learning spaces with improved acoustics and lighting.

Supported inclusion schools offer extra emphasis on services and features that support the student's journey from enrolment, for the duration of enrolment, and finally, as students transition to new learning settings. This includes a focus on resources, equipment and technology; curriculum and pedagogy; and the physical environment.

At Riverbend Primary School we will ensure that our students are at the centre of everything that we do. We will create a learning community that values diversity, inclusion and high expectations for all students which results in excellence for everyone. Our collective responsibility will be to ensure that our students leave our school as well- rounded, critical and creative thinkers who value lifelong learning and who are resilient, respectful and kind citizens.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Riverbend Primary School 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 persistence, encouragement, resilience, respect and inclusion at every opportunity.

Riverbend Primary School vision is to ensure that our students are at the centre of everything that we do. We will create a learning community that values diversity, inclusion and high expectations for all students.



Riverbend Primary School values are Positivity, Excellence, Resilience, Respect and Inclusion.

We demonstrate positivity by having a growth mindset with our learning, which in turn, helps us to achieve excellence.

We value excellence for everyone and encourage others to do their personal best.

We show resilience by being able to bounce back and embrace challenges.

We respect ourselves, our school and each other.

We value inclusion by actively engaging, including and challenging all students and always being kind.

3. Engagement strategies

Riverbend 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.

School-wide Positive Behaviour Support

To assist in embedding strengths-based practice, Riverbend Primary School uses the School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework. SWPBS is a framework for creating safe and positive learning environments in schools, while improving the social-emotional and academic outcomes for students. It utilises a preventative approach that relies on research-based practices, including developing clear behavioural expectations, teaching these expectations, acknowledging appropriate behaviour, consistently correcting inappropriate behaviour, and using behavioural data to systematically solve problems.

Riverbend Primary School adopts a coaching model to support the implementation of SWPBS, which can take three to five years for full implementation. The coaching model focuses on developing the practical skills of school staff to implement SWPBS at their school.

A summary of whole of school, year group specific and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Whole School:

- 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, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, staff opinion survey, student management data and school level assessment data



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- teachers at Riverbend Primary School use a whole school instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction, to ensure that evidenced-based, high impact teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Riverbend 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 whole school 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 Junior School Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, PLT leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through SWPBS and Respectful Relationships multi-age activities, athletics, whole school incursions and special celebrations for e.g. book week activities.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Inclusion Coordinator, Assistant Principal 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
 - Bullying. No Way!
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs and resilience workshops)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs and multi-age activities

Targeted

- each year group has a Team leader who is responsible for their year level, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year level, 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 a mentor teacher
- 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
- 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 with disabilities will have an individual learning plan that incorporates goals and strategies recommended by allied health professionals.

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policies.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- Referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Lookout

Riverbend 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, using alternative communication techniques to engage with the curriculum, or making accommodations for assessment conditions
- referring the student to:
 - School-based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as allied health professionals, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage them 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 Plan 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

Riverbend Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported academically, 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.

Students with a disability at Riverbend PS will engage in academic instruction alongside their same age peers without disabilities, in whole class groups. Riverbend Primary School staff will practice positive behavioural supports and interventions to engage students – preventing behaviour, and teaching and reinforcing skills. The School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework will be used to teach school expected behaviours, inclusive of social-emotional coping strategies. Riverbend PS staff will be encouraged and supported to deliver best practice in developing self-determination skills in students including self-awareness, assertiveness, problem-solving and self-advocacy skills.

Riverbend 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 and behaviour data (including suspension data)
- engagement with families

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.

All 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.

All 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.

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 Riverbend Primary School Bullying policy.

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

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
- missing out on time in the yard
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator/Assistant Principal/Principal
- behaviour reviews with parents/carers
- suspension (internal or external)
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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.

Further information is also available at:

- Procedure for Suspension
- Information for Parent and Carers about Expulsions

As per Department policy the principal of Riverbend Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

See <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>

The above procedures will be communicated to parents and guardians via the school website, the school portal and via parent meetings as per the DET guidelines: Expulsion Policy Resources and Suspension Policy Resources.

Corporal punishment is prohibited and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Riverbend 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
- providing open classroom sessions (at least one per term) to enable parents to observe their child's class
- celebrating our successes through Compass, Facebook and See-Saw
- encouraging parents to attend whole school assemblies and special events

8. Evaluation

Riverbend 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 (from Compass)
- school reports
- parent survey

- case management
- staff opinion survey
- CASES21
- SOCS

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- [*Student Wellbeing and Engagement*](#)
- *Bullying Prevention*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Child Safe Standards*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Yard duty and Supervision Policy*

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on school website
- Staff googledrive
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

Policy REVIEW and Approval

Policy last reviewed	February 2023
Approved by	Principal
Consultation with school council	To be tabled at the next meeting
Next scheduled review date	Before February 2025