

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Pakenham Primary School on 03 5918 3900 or pakenham.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

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.

Pakenham 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
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Policy

1. School profile

Pakenham Primary School is located in the Cardinia Shire, in Victoria's outer southeast suburbs. The school was founded in 2018 and opened for students in 2019. The school buildings include a combined administration and library block, two large teaching and learning buildings, each with a specialist space in the centre, dividing each building into separate Learning Communities (LCs), a combined indoor gymnasium, performing arts centre and additional specialist classroom, as well as 3 portable Mod 5 buildings as additional Learning Communities (LCs). The grounds include three adventure playgrounds, a nature playground, two basketball courts, and an oval.

PPS has approximately 410 students enrolled from Foundation to Year 6. The Staffing profile of Pakenham Primary School includes a Principal, 2 Assistant Principals, other Leadership staff (Learning

Specialists and Leading Teacher), Generalist Teachers, Learning Community Education Support Staff, Administration Staff, Wellbeing Support Staff (including a school Psychologist), and a Grounds and Maintenance person.

The teaching teams are organised into Professional Learning Communities (PLC) for planning, organisation and program implementation. The staff and students work collaboratively within flexible learning communities (LCs). Specialist subjects offered include Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Science, Chinese and Auslan. Pakenham Primary School established a sister school relationship with Cangwu Primary School, Lianyungang late in 2019.

The Student Family Occupation and Education (SFOE) places the school in the medium overall socio-economic profile. Our school is culturally diverse with a number of families having a language background other than English (LOTE). We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

Pakenham Primary School provides an approved curriculum framework based on the Victorian Curriculum, differentiated to meet student needs. The primary focus for the school is to provide a safe and orderly learning environment, provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum and to ensure effective teaching in every Learning Community.

The school has a Student VAL (Voice, Agency, Leadership) team, with student representatives from across the school, to develop student leadership and decision making capacity, and to contribute to school policy development. The school has onsite Out of Hours Care and School Holiday Care provided by Big Childcare.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Pakenham 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 model our core expectations of "Be a Learner", "Be Respectful" and "Be Safe" at every opportunity.

Our school's vision aims to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Pakenham Primary School's motto is "Inspiring success", and we strive to provide a nurturing, inclusive and challenging learning environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Pakenham 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/cohort/need 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
- 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 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 Pakenham Primary School use the PPS 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 Pakenham 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 Expectations ("Be a Learner", "Be Respectful" and "Be Safe") and Motto ("Inspiring success") 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 support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- Monitoring student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- facilitate students to have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Voice Team and other forums including classroom student voice meetings, surveys, suggestion boxes, in person to school staff etc. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Education Support Staff, Leadership Staff, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Creating opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school concerts, athletics, house games, clubs etc.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Wellbeing staff, first aid staff, Leadership staff, Assistant Principals and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Inspiring Success (PPS Program)
- facilitate programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management and personal safety programs)
- provide opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, house challenges, recess and lunchtime activities)
- 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 Learning Community has a Team Leader, a teacher responsible for their learning community, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, 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 RAP for further information
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, 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 backgrounds through regular communication with the family, utilising translation services if required, making referrals to local services, setting up Student Support Groups and developing Individual Education Plans, as appropriate
- 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

Pakenham 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 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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Pakenham Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school Leadership Team and Wellbeing Team play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Pakenham 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

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Pakenham 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
- referral to Leadership
- restorative practices
- reflection sessions
- written reflection tasks
- 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.

The Principal of Pakenham 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

Pakenham 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
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Pakenham 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
- staff survey data
- parent survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- case management
- CASES21 (and Compass), including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Pakenham 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
- 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 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

Policy review and approval

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the School Council to confirm/enhance internal control procedures. Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with relevant staff and School Council if applicable.

School Council President	School Principal
Name: Travis Mether	Name: Gail Butterworth
Signed: 	Signed: 

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy	
Approval Date	September 3rd, 2024
Next Scheduled Review Date	September, 2026

Version	Date	Modification	Consultation	Modified By
Draft	July 2018	Personalised policy to Pakenham Primary School		Gail Butterworth
Version 1	December 2020	Updated policy information throughout including school profile and offered programs		Rachael Kimber
Version 2	June 2022	Changes made based on compliance to Ministerial Order 1359 (commencing 1 July 2022)		Rachael Kimber
		Reviewed and prepared for school council and community feedback, as part of regular evaluation. Updated based on the newest template for compliance with Child Safe Standards. Changes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adding contact details to the first section • altering the Policy review section to ensure 		

Version 3

School Council approved this policy on: September 3rd, 2024

		<p>compliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Profile updated • Updates Expectations in School values, philosophy and vision section 		
Version 3	September 2024	<p>Reviewed and prepared for school council and community feedback, as part of regular evaluation. Updated based on the newest template for compliance with Child Safe Standards. Changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adding contact details to the first section • altering the Policy review section to ensure compliance. 	<p>School Council: September 3rd, 2024</p> <p>Community consultation through Compass Post: September, 2024</p>	Rachael Kimber