



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Administration Team on 9687 2826 or footscray.city.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.

Footscray City 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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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

At Footscray City Primary School we pride ourselves on being a community of highly engaged learners, children and adults alike. Our staff are motivated to make a difference in the lives of our students, consistent with our School Mission Statement that we are 'future making for every child so that they are learning to learn, learning to thrive and learning to contribute.' It is our School Vision that students will 'possess the skills, knowledge and ways of thinking that enable them to embrace learning, respond to challenges and thrive as active members of the community.'

Our school values underpin our approaches to learning and relationships, and were developed in collaboration with our students, parents and staff. At Footscray City Primary School we are a diverse and inclusive COMMUNITY who value taking RESPONSIBILITY for our learning and our impact on ourselves, others and our environment, thinking and acting with KINDNESS which means we are friendly towards others and considerate of their feelings, and demonstrating RESILIENCE by persisting and being courageous when faced with challenges in our learning and relationships.

Footscray City Primary School (FCPS) is a Foundation to year 6 school established in 1877 in the inner west suburb of Footscray, in the City of Maribyrnong, seven kilometres from central Melbourne. The school is located next to the City of Maribyrnong Council Offices and is four hundred metres south of the Footscray railway station. We are also a campus for the Western English Language School (WELS).

The school's long and rich history is reflected in its three buildings. The original 1877 Bluestone Building is now used for the Instrumental and Ensemble Music Program and the allocation of classroom spaces for the WELS. The 1910 brick building houses six classrooms and a large central area that allows for collaborative learning experiences and is home to the school library. The 1970's brick building houses the school's administration area, staff-room, art program, canteen, general purpose classrooms and a variety of offices and small group spaces. In 2023 this building will be the focus of a \$14.3 million Capital Works refurbishment, which will see the upgrading of our Art Room, a revised floor plan to allow for 6 learning communities (each with 4 classrooms, a shared resource intensive area and collaborative learning space), a new office entry and administration areas.

In recent years we have invested significantly in the enhancement of our school grounds, understanding the contribution this makes to student engagement and wellbeing, and an overall sense of pride in our school. The highlight in 2022 was the upgrading of two nature/sensory play areas, funded through an Inclusive Schools grant totalling \$200 000. In addition to this, the focus of school community fundraising in 2022 through our Fundraising and Community Events (FACE) sub-committee of the School Council was to fund a refurbishment to our school entry on Hyde Street which also includes garden areas and nature/sensory play options. Our grounds also have two playgrounds, synthetic turf soccer pitch, basketball and downball courts, a grassed area and Gymnasium.

We are proud to be one of three schools involved in the Footscray Learning Precinct (FLP), a unique State Government initiative that sees us as collaborative partners with Footscray Primary School, Footscray High School and the Billy Button Children's Centre, as well as Maribyrnong City Council and Victoria University. Together we are striving to implement research based approaches to



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teaching, learning, collaboration and community partnerships so as to enhance learning outcomes for students and provide seamless transitions through all stages of learning.

We are also fortunate to be the recipients of Capital Works funding as members of the Footscray Learning Precinct, with the latest allocation of funding delivering the refurbishment of the Main Building in 2023-24 which will see students and teachers operating year level learning communities.

2. School mission, values and vision

The Mission, Vision and Values at Footscray City Primary School are integral to the work that we do and are the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of responsibility, kindness and resilience at every opportunity and in all interactions.

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.

Mission

We are future making for every child so that they are learning to learn, learning to thrive and learning to contribute.

Vision

Our students will possess the skills, knowledge and ways of thinking that enable them to embrace learning, respond to challenges and thrive as active members of the community.

Values

At Footscray City Primary School we are a diverse and inclusive **COMMUNITY** who value:

- ~ Taking **RESPONSIBILITY** for our learning and our impact on ourselves, others and our environment.
- ~ Thinking and acting with **KINDNESS** which means we are friendly towards others and considerate of their feelings.
- ~ Demonstrating **RESILIENCE** by persisting and being courageous when faced with challenges in our learning and relationships.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Footscray City 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*



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- *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 Footscray City Primary use the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRoR) instructional framework 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 Footscray City 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 Mission, Vision and Values are incorporated into our curriculum within the School Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPBS) Framework and are promoted to students, staff and parents. This supports a shared understanding of expectations and these are 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 Council and other forums including year group meetings and Student Action Teams (Senior School). Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, wellbeing staff and members of the leadership team whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through collaborative learning experiences, Buddy Programs, student leadership including Peer Mediators and whole school and/or community events.*
- *all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Officer, Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, teachers and members of the leadership team 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:*
 - *Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships*
 - *School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework*
 - *Mental Health in Primary Schools - Mental Health Continuum (Be You)*
 - *Safe Schools*
 - *Cyber Safety Years 3-6*
 - *Student Action Team training and program - facilitated by Kate Wilde*
 - *Peer Mediation - facilitated by Kate Wilde*
 - *Sexual Health Education - facilitated by Family Planning Victoria*



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- *opportunities for student inclusion through initiatives such as sports teams, student buddy program, lunchtime clubs and small group social skills and therapy 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 cohort has a Professional Learning Team (PLT) Leader acting as a senior teacher responsible for monitoring the health and wellbeing of students in that year level. The PLT Leader collaborates with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator who then acts as a point of contact for the team and 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. Please note the school prioritises 1-1 support for all First Nations students funded through the Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program and regular PSG meetings are also offered to all Koorie families.*
- *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](#) including collaboration with Safe Schools who provide professional learning for staff and student case management advice*
- *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 Education 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

Below are student specific strategies that are considered and applied on a case by case basis:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:



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- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)
- [SAFE SCHOOLS](#)

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

- *building positive and trusting relationships with all students particularly those at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
- *meeting with student and their parents/carers to talk about how best to help the student's engagement with their learning*
- *developing an Individual Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Implementing, monitoring and assessing classroom/teaching adjustments*
- *Establishing clear referral pathways 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*

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*
- *student wellbeing will be included as an agenda item for weekly team meetings*
- *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 Education 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

Footscray City 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Footscray City Primary School 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*



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- *academic performance*
- *Regular tracking and auditing of Chronicle data*
- *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*
- *[Amend to include other referral pathways]*

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 (school environment?)
- 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 and management

- *Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school values of Responsibility, Kindness and Resilience*
- *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, Footscray City 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 actions taken by teachers and other school staff.



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Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

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. measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard. Measures that may be applied include:

- *Reinforcing, reminding and redirecting students towards expected positive behaviours*
- *teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *referral to the Year Level Coordinator/ Wellbeing staff and/or Leadership*
- *restorative and trauma informed practices*
- *detentions (?)*
- *behaviour support and intervention meetings*
- *suspension (internal/external)*
- *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 Footscray City 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 circumstances at Footscray City Primary School.

7. Engaging with families

Footscray City 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 lines of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent/carers volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities



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- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups
- supporting families with accessing external supports and referral pathways

8. Evaluation

Footscray City 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS
- Chronicle data

Footscray City 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 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	25 May, 2023
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May, 2025