

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Date Reviewed: June 2023
School Council Ratified: N/A

Review Cycle: 2 Years
Next Review: 2025



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the Fitzroy North Primary School office on 9481 5860.

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.

Fitzroy North 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

1. School profile

Fitzroy North Primary School first opened in 1875 and was originally named the Alfred Crescent School. Fitzroy North Primary School is located in inner city Melbourne opposite the Edinburgh Gardens with an enrolment of approximately 390 students in 2023. Our school community has representation from a range of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds; we are proud of our diverse and inclusive school community.

Fitzroy North Primary School has developed close ties to the local community and enjoys support from our local shops and community services, including a connection with the Bargoonga Nganjin, North Fitzroy Library. We leverage our location and extend the school experience beyond our grounds, which includes daily yard duty at the Edinburgh Gardens for our senior students, as well as regular local walking excursions in the surrounding neighbourhood, to support our experiential learning philosophy.

Our school values of Kindness, Resilience and Respect underpin everything we say and do. Student voice, leadership and agency are fostered and valued.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

PHILOSOPHY

At Fitzroy North Primary School, our practice is underpinned by our beliefs about educating the whole child. By allowing students the opportunity to express themselves socially, intellectually, creatively and physically in a manner that honours their own personal learning style, their learning journey becomes a reflection of their uniqueness.

Our children are at the centre of everything we do. We strive to develop creative, inquisitive and socially conscious individuals who question the world around them. We do this by delivering a rigorous and diverse teaching and learning program that involves experiential learning opportunities that foster deep inquiry, collaboration, exploration and play. We believe that these experiences provide opportunities for deep critical thinking skills to be explored and developed.

We understand that learning is a continuum and we meet and support each child at their point of individual need as they move along this continuum. We value risk taking and provide the scaffolds that allow students to feel supported as they work towards mastering new skills and understandings.

Our students contribute to the decision making at our school and their opinions are heard and valued. Through teacher and student led learning experiences, our children become co-constructors of their understanding of the world around them.

Through nurturing the wellbeing of each and every member of the Fitzroy North Primary School community, we celebrate inclusion and honour the rich diversity of our children, our staff and our community in all that we do.

VISION

Fitzroy North Primary School's vision is to develop the whole child. We strive to inspire our students to be curious, creative, socially conscious and able to think critically.

MISSION

Fitzroy North Primary School's mission is to provide stimulating and vibrant learning environments and experiences that honour each child's individual learning journey; allowing every child to thrive.

VALUES

Fitzroy North Primary School's values are Kindness, Resilience and Respect.

- We model and demonstrate Kindness, and take every opportunity to help others that may be in need.
- We demonstrate Resilience by facing challenges with courage and striving to always move towards a positive outcome.
- We Respect ourselves, our school and each other, and understand that our attitudes and actions have an impact on the people around us.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Fitzroy North 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 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
- 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 Fitzroy North Primary School use the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model instructional framework, which provides an explicit, shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high-yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Fitzroy North 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
- teachers differentiate teaching and learning experiences to the point of individual need for each student. This includes supporting and extending students requiring both intervention and extension; allowing every student to be fully engaged in their learning journey and reach their full potential.
- our school's Statement of Values is 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

- 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 and other forums such as year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through our Junior School Council, Buddy Program, Choir, Rock Band, Grade 5&6 sports, Grade 4-6 athletics, Prep-3 Sports Afternoon and Whole School assemblies.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to members of the Principal Class 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
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue-specific behaviour (i.e. Calm Kids, Mindful Monkeys, The Reach Foundation)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy program for Prep students with Grade 6 students; ad-hoc peers support 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

- 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
- 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 developing a Student Support Plan and establishing a Student Support Group for any LGBTIQ+ students who require this 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
- 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

Fitzroy North 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 students 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

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
- 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

Fitzroy North 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. Fitzroy North Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- Compass Chronicle records
- 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.

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 and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

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, Fitzroy North Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. 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 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
- restorative practices
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- referral to the Principal Class
- 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 Fitzroy North 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

Fitzroy North 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
- 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.

8. Evaluation

Fitzroy North 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

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 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
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2023
Consultation	Policy and Curriculum Subcommittee – June 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2025