



## STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the office on 03 9726 6931 or [manchester.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:manchester.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.

Manchester 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.

### CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities

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## **POLICY**

### **School profile**

Manchester Primary is a P-6 school located in the outer eastern suburb of Mooroolbark. Our school offers students and staff spacious grounds with a \$4.7million upgrade recently completed to our buildings. In 2024 we have approximately 190 students in 10 classes.

Manchester Primary School is committed to providing high quality education in a learning environment where each child is valued and encouraged to achieve their best. The Manchester Primary School vision is to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment where every student can reach their full potential. This vision is supported by our motto: Inspire, Engage, Achieve.

At Manchester Primary School we make learning and social development of every child our priority. We value relationships as the foundation on which student success is built. Our teaching and learning approach targets achievement by promoting active engagement in learning, based on the Victorian Curriculum.

### **School values, philosophy and vision**

The Manchester Primary School community is guided by our behaviour values of Responsibility, Respect and Resilience. We are focused on promoting wellbeing in our school community to substantially improve social and emotional outcomes for our students, using the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework. This evidence-based approach provides effective ways to create a positive and engaging learning environment, and has research to show its success in promoting positive behaviour, improving school culture, and increasing academic performance. Through this approach, we explicitly teach the expected positive behaviours which are outlined in our Positive Behaviour Matrix. This is further supported through our Flying Start, Respectful Relationships and Zones of Regulation programs.

The school embraces and celebrates its diverse community, and works proactively to ensure all students enjoy equitable access to the school's curriculum and co-curricular programs. Our staff uphold the Victorian public sector values of integrity, responsiveness, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and a commitment to human rights.

Our Statement of Values is available online on [our website](#).

#### **1. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Manchester 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 relationships in helping children and students feel safe, connected, and ready to learn. 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 (Tier 1), targeted (Tier 2) and individual engagement (Tier 3) strategies used by our school is included below:

#### Universal (Tier 1)

- 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
- a strong school philosophy which includes explicitly teaching expected and prosocial behaviours
- maximising students' opportunities to respond during intense instruction to increase engagement
- ensuring effective teaching and learning is at the heart of all of our practices
- 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 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 Manchester Primary School use a common 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 Manchester 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 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 thorough 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 class meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal, Principal, and other staff whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school concerts, athletics, music programs and Buddies programs

- all students are welcome to self-refer to the 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:
  - Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Zones of Regulation
  - A Flying Start program
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. friendship 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 (Tier 2)

Manchester Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote targeted engagement to students who require them. These can include:

- each class teacher 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 Marrung leader, Andrea Lowe, for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL curriculum, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- 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 \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- 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 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](#)
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as Treehouse, Play is the Way, and Buddies.

### Individual (Tier 3)

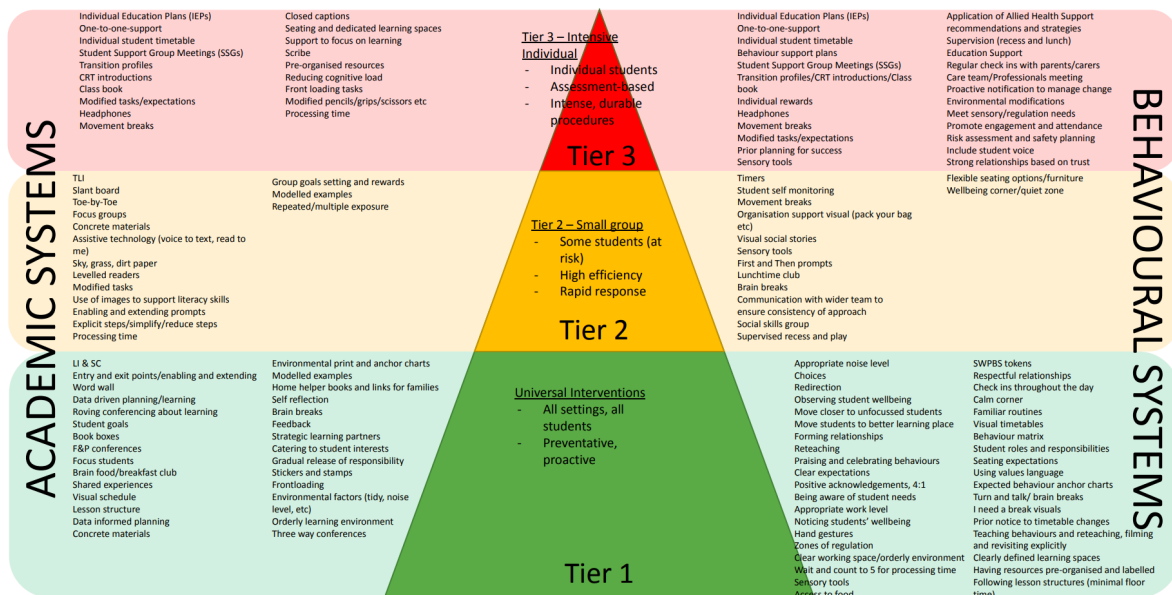
Manchester Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- 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

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.

We also utilise a range of other supports which are documented in our SWPBS Whole School Approach to Tiered Intervention.



## 2. Identifying students in need of support

Manchester Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The leadership team along with classroom teachers, specialist teachers and education support staff play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Manchester Primary School utilises 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

## 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
- 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.

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, Manchester 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.

Natural Consequences and behaviour support plans may be used as part of a staged response to 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. Natural consequences at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

We have a consistent procedure for responding to minor and major behaviours:

**Continuum of procedures for responding to minor behaviours**



- PROXIMITY - get closer
- GIVE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS
- NON VERBAL CUES - point or gesture in direction
- INCREASED PRAISE - for any correction or improvement
- RESTITUTION - let them fix it
- SUPPORT FOR ROUTINE
- INCREASED PRECORRECTION

- REDIRECT - Redirect them to something else
- RETEACH - Show them what you want
- PROVIDE CHOICE
- CONFERENCE - talk respectfully and privately to the student
- APPROPRIATE MATERIAL – Is the work appropriate?
- SEEK ADVICE / ASSISTANCE

- Behaviour now considered a Major
- Follow Major response chart

MAJOR	MINOR
Physical aggression Verbal aggression Damage to property including graffiti Theft Absconding that puts self or others at risk Intimidating or threatening others Possession of weapons Substance use Sexualised behaviour	All other behaviours are considered minor See above for response flowchart  <i>Repeated minor becomes a major</i>

### Major Behaviour Safety Plan

Used for behaviours presenting a serious and immediate safety risk e.g. physical violence, absconding

- Proactive Measures - see individual student behaviour plans

- **Response Measures**

1. **Ensure safety**
  - a. Remove any dangerous objects out of student's reach where possible
  - b. If necessary for safety, separate the student from other students - either by asking the student to move, or if this is not possible moving the other students.
  - c. The focus is on de-escalating the situation
2. *Call for assistance* from other staff – Leadership/Teacher in charge and/or another available staff member if possible.
3. The student to remain in a quiet and safe area with two staff members to supervise. One close and one at a distance.
4. *Call Principal /Assistant Principal for advice.*
5. Leadership team to *call the student's guardians* to inform of incident. If there is a continued safety risk, the student's guardians will be asked to collect them. If they are unable to collect the student, call others on contact list according to specified order.
6. *All DE and legal requirements to be followed* throughout:
  - a. Call 000 if necessary for support in emergencies or if the student leaves the school grounds and cannot be returned
  - b. First aid and OH&S procedures to be followed
  - c. Log the incident with the DE Incident Support Centre
  - a. Relevant DE guidelines: Responding to Violent and Dangerous Student Behaviours of Concern, Restraint, Suspension processes etc

- Restorative Measures

1. Reaffirm adult/support relationships
2. Review Support and Behaviour Plan (where relevant) to adjust as required

Consequences that may be applied include:

- telling 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, as per our minor and major behaviour procedure
- 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 Manchester 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**

Manchester 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 through School Council, subcommittees and PAFA
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## **6. Evaluation**

Manchester 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
- incident data

- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Manchester 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 and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)

## **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Policy last reviewed	October 2024
Consultation	School Improvement Team Education Subcommittee School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2026