

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 03 9555 4155 during office hours.

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.

Bayside Special Developmental 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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Bayside

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POLICY

1. School profile

Bayside Special Developmental School is located in the City of Kingston in the suburb of Moorabbin, in the south-east of Melbourne. The school is approximately 15 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was established in 1986, on the site of the former Moorabbin High School. The school was re-built at the end of 2019 and we are fortunate to have new purposely designed buildings for learning and administration, including specialist rooms for art, home crafts and therapy spaces.

Bayside Special Developmental School provides a range of educational and therapeutic programs for students aged 2.8 to 18 years, who have moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. A number of students have multiple disabilities including autism, physical or sensory impairments and conditions requiring medical interventions and management. The school operates up to 11 school aged classes and in addition conducts a further 2 Early Education classrooms.

Bayside SDS provides a curriculum based on the F-10 Victorian Curriculum and includes the 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum', referred to as 'Levels A to D'. It provides students with access to curriculum content and standards that enable progression toward the learning described at Foundation level. These levels are not associated with any age or set year level. All students have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), based on the learning areas and levels of development of individual students.

At Bayside Special Developmental School, the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people is the highest priority. The school staff work in partnership with The Royal Children's Hospital and the Monash Medical Centre to develop care plans and train members of staff in the care and management of students with additional medical needs. Bayside Special Developmental school strives to ensure the continued safety and wellbeing of children and young people. There is a zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns are treated seriously and consistently. Bayside Special Developmental School is committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment where all students can be happy, confident and resilient, regardless of their sexual or gender identity, cultural background, disability or other circumstances. We take account of the diversity of all children,



including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Bayside Special Developmental 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 live and demonstrate our core values of teamwork, respect, opportunity, compassion and community.

Our school's vision is to maximise educational opportunities, engagement and enrichment for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities in an environment which is safe, welcoming and fun.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Bayside Special Developmental 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 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 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 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, wellbeing check-ins, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- delivering a broad curriculum including programs tailored to student interests, strengths and aspirations
- using an SWPBS 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
- adopting a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and following the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching



- incorporating our school philosophy and values into our curriculum, and promoting them to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planning transition programs to 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 implementing attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - SWPBS
 - Wellbeing check-ins
 - Tier two and tier three interventions and plans
 - Explicit teaching of SWPBS expectations
- having measures 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

- 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 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

Individual

- [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:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Disability Inclusion Reforms](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Bayside Special Developmental School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Education Plan and 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 allied health professionals, 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 Plan 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

4. Identifying students in need of support

Bayside Special Developmental 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, helping identify students in need of support and enhancing student wellbeing. Bayside Special Developmental 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
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- referrals to MHP and allied health team

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 communicate this 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

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 and the *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Bayside Special Developmental 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 implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures.

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.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- 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 Bayside Special Developmental 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

Bayside Special Developmental 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.
- involving families in school decision making
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Bayside Special Developmental 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:

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

Bayside Special Developmental 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 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

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| Policy last reviewed | August 2023 |
| Consultation | School council, August 2023 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | August 2025 |

