



Noorat Primary School

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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.

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.

Noorat 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. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
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8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School Profile Statement

Noorat is a friendly, vibrant and highly motivated learning community. We are committed to providing stimulating teaching and learning opportunities to each and every child.

Established in 1873 we have a proud history of providing high quality education for our community within a safe and caring environment. Our school values of Excellence, Care, Respect and Responsibility are evident in everything we do.

In 2023, Noorat Primary School has an enrolment of 15 students with a clear goal to grow our school. With a highly committed staff, a vast array of changes have been implemented over the past few years, including a strong focus on student engagement and wellbeing. Noorat Primary School is committed to providing its students with an inspiring and challenging education in a friendly environment where everyone is respected, valued and belongs. There is a commitment to continuous improvement and achieving excellence in teaching and learning in all areas of the school.

Our strengths include the personalised approach that we can offer in teaching and learning, small group work to develop creativity and collaborative skills, as well as hands-on experiences - such as caring for animals, tending to our garden and cooking with fresh produce, creating environmental welcoming spaces and opportunities to connect with our local community through What's Noo (local town newsletter), the Noorat Show and by creating the town Christmas window display.

We have high expectations for the learning of all students and believe that every child can achieve and be successful. Noorat Primary consists of a highly professional and committed staff, all of whom view meeting the diverse needs of our students as a priority. Our involvement with Respectful Relationships, Hands on Learning, Berry Street Educational Model and Life Skills Go underpin our school philosophy and align with our school priorities as set out in the Student Engagement Policy. Our school grounds are extensive, including large grassed areas, playgrounds and a sensory garden for our students to enjoy.

Quality programs are offered to all students in the Arts, Physical Education, MARC library, Science, LOTE and Humanities which includes our kitchen / garden program. We also offer Hands on Learning to boost student engagement and learn lifelong skills in a meaningful way whilst giving back to the school and local community. Our specialist classes complement the quality Literacy and Numeracy programs we provide our students. We aim to progress and engage all students, with our priority being that all students want to come to school, want to learn and experience success. Our staff collaborate with other small schools weekly in our area to ensure we are following best practice and continually reflecting on our research-based programs.

We have representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with staff ensuring learning about a range of First Nations and International cultures is embedded in ongoing practices. Being a small school we create a positive sense of community and proactive learning amongst our students, staff and parents.

At Noorat every person matters! Staff, students, parents and our wider community, all work collaboratively to inspire each other, build respectful relationships and remain committed to education.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Noorat Primary School is an inviting place where every child receives every opportunity. Our students receive a quality education where every student is valued, nurtured and celebrated without exception. We take pride in nurturing close relationships with students, parents, family and teachers, and enjoy working together to build strong partnerships with the wider community. We are a school that parents want their children to attend, and one of which students are proud, enthusiastic and happy to belong.

Our School Values of Excellence, Care, Respect and Responsibility underpin our learning culture and interactions between students, parents and staff. Noorat Primary School is dedicated to providing our students with a high quality education that caters for individual differences and enables all student to realise their full potential. We want students to leave our school as skilled learners who are confident, resilient, persistent, creative, curious and respectful citizens.

3. Wellbeing and engagement Strategies

Noorat 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 and feeling connected in helping children and students feel safe and included. 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. Our responsibility, as stated in our Child Safety documents, is for every child to feel safe and secure at school. As a positive psychology school, we are committed to embedding social and emotional learning practices and holistic wellbeing approaches for all students at Noorat.

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 / 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
- regularly revisiting school values & expectations through the 'Fab Four' and School Wide Positive Behaviour charts – these were created with student voice and are displayed in every learning / work space
- 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 Noorat 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 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 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 School & House Leaders and the Junior School Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teacher and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through specialist classes, school camps and excursions, sporting events and extra-curricular activities
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the 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:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Life Skills Go
 - Berry Street Educational Model
 - Hands on learning
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)

Targeted

- each teacher will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in our school, 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. We engage with our local Koorie Education Support Officers who provide advice to our school about culturally inclusive learning environments, and utilise the WSW Marrung Inclusion Practices.
- 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 Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services, as needed, 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 undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data and staff
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- staff undertake Cultural Understanding and Safety Training (CUST) to deepen connection and understanding of the indigenous culture and to provide a safe learning environment for indigenous students

Individual

Noorat 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 Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up, adapted timetables and routines
- referring the student to:
 - 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.

Some strategies that may be used to support an individual student's wellbeing & engagement are:

- [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](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- CAMHS
- Orange Door

4. Identifying students in need of support

Noorat Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. All staff play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Noorat 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, 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, member of staff or the Principal. 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. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with our *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Noorat 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.

Noorat Primary School is committed to engaging all students. Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as being wexited from class, a reflection or withdrawal of privileges.

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.

Our school processes link back to our School Values and the 'Fab Four':

1. I show respect by listening attentively.
2. I show I am responsible by following instructions.
3. I am caring by being thoughtful.
4. I show excellence by trying my best.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- reminding a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
 - Students are provided with two verbal reminders that their behaviour is inappropriate.
Eg: "Name, you are not being responsible by following my instructions. This is your first reminder."
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
 - "Name, you are continuing to talk and disrupt others when you should be working, please sit here."
- moving a student to the exit table / space after 2 reminders have been given
 - Eg: "Name, you are again not being responsible by following my instructions. You have received two reminders already. Please move to the exit table."
- restorative practices / discussions
 - The teacher who exited the student will complete a restorative discussion prior to them re-entering the classroom. Questions asked: 'Can you tell me what happened for you to be exited?' 'What school value / expectation were you not following?' 'What should you have been doing?' 'What impact is this behaviour having on yourself and others?' 'What will you do when you re-enter the classroom?' 'Is there anyone you need to restore a relationship with?'
- reflections
 - Students may receive a reflection if a behaviour endangers the safety / wellbeing of another person.
 - Students may receive a reflection if they are exited multiple times within one week.
 - Reflections require paperwork to be completed by the student through a discussion with the teacher. A copy will be sent home to parents to be signed and returned.
- withdrawal of privileges
- 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 Noorat Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Noorat 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 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

Noorat 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
- student check-in data (Life Skills Go)
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Noorat 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 office upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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 Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- Child Safety Policies
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy will be reviewed in line with the Department Policy Guidelines.

Policy last reviewed	October 2023
Consultation	School Council – October 2023 ClassDojo – August 2023
Endorsed by	Ilona Watkins, Principal School Council
Endorsed on	October 2023
Next review date	October 2025