



NEWHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy

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.

Newham 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

Our school is a rural school completed in 2009 through the Statewide Rural Replacement Program. The school is committed to:

- providing a happy, inclusive, caring and stimulating environment that engages the parents and local community and equips our students with the knowledge, skills and values to meet future challenges in learning and social interactions by optimising individual and student outcomes.
 - Continuous improvement and excellence in teaching and learning.
- Situated in an artistic community, the school has a culture that nurtures originality and imagination, including performance and visual arts. It has a partnership with Newham Landcare. The Environmental Science program facilitates WaterWatch as well as community projects where students can make a difference in their community. Other extra-curricular programs include: instrumental music program, a range of visual art classes and LOTE.

*This policy is written in consultation with DET Guidelines.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

Our school is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Please see our Bullying Prevention Policy for more information.

Our philosophy:

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

Our vision:

All students are confident, curious learners who feel supported and able to meet the challenges at school and beyond.

Our values: Respect, Responsibility, Unity, Resilience.

Statement of Purpose

Newham Primary School strives to be a quality, dynamic learning community that equips our students with the knowledge, skills and values to meet future challenges as resilient, creative and independent lifelong learners.

It is a school that values individuality (whilst being considerate and respectful of others) and promotes excellence in a happy, safe, caring and inspiring environment that embraces the broader community.

Our School Community Values

Positive relationships are important to the school with four core values identified.

Respect - Due regard for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others, belongings and property. At Newham Primary School we look after our school and everyone in it – **Do the right thing.**

Responsibility - A moral obligation to behave correctly towards or in respect of something or someone. At Newham Primary School we follow the rules and expectations – **First time, every time.**

Unity - A state of being united, coming together as a whole. At Newham Primary School we work together as a team – **Together we can.**

Resilience - The ability to recover quickly from a tough, difficult or challenging situation. At Newham Primary School we work through problems calmly together and ask for help from teachers if we need it – **I choose to defuse.**

Student engagement and school connectedness is vital for effective student learning. Student engagement can be defined in three components.

- **Behavioural engagement** - a student's participation in education, including academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.
- **Emotional engagement** – a student's emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school, a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- **Cognitive engagement** – a student's investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self regulation.

School Connection Statement:

***Newham Primary School endeavours to create an
environment in which every child feels happy,
safe and valued.***

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Newham 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.

In order that children develop a sense of responsibility for their actions and an awareness of the need to care for and value the rights of others, class and school protocols are developed at the beginning of each year through a collaborative process involving students and teachers. These behaviour expectations are reinforced formally and informally throughout the year, are displayed in each classroom and shared with parents.

Restorative Practice in conjunction with our School Wide Positive Behaviour Practices is an approach aimed at ensuring a safe and happy learning environment. It seeks to promote resilience and to contribute to the building of positive relationships in the school community. It is focussed on helping students become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others through personal accountability and learning from a conflict situation.

Our school-wide positive behaviours initiative has been adopted to address a wide range of positive and negative behaviours in the classroom and playground.

Our objective is to create an effective, respectful, learning environment. We strive to create a place where students look forward to coming to each day.

We recognise the value of Respectful Relationships and implement the appropriate strategies.

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion are available here:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/behaviour/Pages/suspended-school.aspx>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/behaviour/Pages/expelled-school.aspx>

Universal

Strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion include:

- 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, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Newham Primary School use an 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 Newham 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 on a regular basis
- 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 Junior Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

*This policy is written in consultation with DET Guidelines.

- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music and art programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator, Principal or Teaching staff 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
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy 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

Strategies to target certain age groups may include:

- each classroom has a teacher responsible for monitoring 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 Aboriginal Learning, Safety and Wellbeing Plan for further information
- 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 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.
- 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

Strategies to target certain individual students may include:

- [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](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Newham 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 the student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan, Safety 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:
 - 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
 - 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:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring
 - Koorie students

4. Identifying students in need of support

Newham 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. Newham 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, particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- consultation/referral with School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Secondary consultation with Sunbury Macedon Ranges Specialist School, Specialist School Support Services(SSSO) and CAMHS Mental Health Outreach Program (MHOP)
- School Entry Health Questionnaire

Strategies for identifying students in need:

The school identifies students in need of assessment and extra support during first term each year. Foundation students attend four transition days during November/December and informal assessments begin. Our Workforce planning and Annual Implementation Plan then address the needs of all these students to ensure there are resources and support in place for them over the year. We gather information at enrolment, monitor their attendance and behaviour and assess their academic performance in literacy and numeracy. A Student Support Group (which includes the parents, allied health workers as appropriate, education support staff, classroom teacher and Principal) is established for students identified as having a special need and this group meets regularly to identify classroom strategies and access assessments from SSSO regional staff as

needed. A comprehensive list (and files) of these students is kept up-to-date regarding the Educational Learning Plan, timetabled support, strategies, assessments and meetings to monitor their progress.

Children are encouraged to develop self-discipline, to respect staff and other students, to work and play co-operatively, take pride in their school and value achievement. We explicitly teach values, social skills, expected behaviour strategies for successful play and getting along with others in class and the playground using Friendly Schools, FUSE, Bullystoppers, Kidsmatter and School Wide Positive Behaviours programmes and materials.

To further support these goals the Wellbeing Coordinator provides individual, family and small group support.

We encourage students to understand the control they have over their attitudes and behaviour, acknowledge that their actions and behaviours can sometimes cause harm to others, and teach them to work towards repairing relationships. Students are expected to be honest, to work co-operatively and to respect staff, students and others.

Programs implemented at Newham Primary School to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours.

Across Whole School	Class Levels	Community/Parent linked
Wellbeing Approach – wholeschool collective responsibility for all students.	Leadership Program – Yr 6	School Welcome - February
Literacy and Numeracy Week	Kitchen Garden program	Education Week Activities
Whole school activity days	Interschool Sport – senior students	Supporting local RSL activities for Anzac Day & Remembrance Day
Cyber Safety Program	School Camp Program	Parent Helpers Program- in classrooms
SunSmart Program	Health & Human Relations	Partnership with Newham Landcare Group
Student Council & Voice	Netbook & IT Program	Parent Group- Fundraising and school activities
Excursions/incursions	Buddy Program Yr Prep & 5/6 and new students	Parent/Teacher Interviews
Differentiated Curriculum: addressing ways in which students vary as learners.	Transitions K-Prep Year 6-7	School Performances
Whole School Concerts	Parent Information Sessions	Clean Up Australia Day
Integration Support Program	Team teaching	Work Experience for local students
Information Communication Technology (ICT) rich environment	Learning spaces conducive to learning	SCHOOL'SOUT! Before & After-School program
Wellbeing Programmes: Bounce Back Respectful Relationships	Access to an instrumental tutor programme	Support Social/Community Projects eg Northern Combined Cycle Club; Newham Community Planning Group; Daffodil Festival
ResourceSmart program	Wellbeing Programmes: Drug Education Bounce Back Puberty sessions	Working Bees
Whole School Assembly	Smiling Minds mental health program	School newsletter & social media pages
Special Weeks NAIDOC Week Science Week Education Week Book Week	School Wide Positive Behaviours Program	

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 speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or the Principal. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and solutions

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

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, Example 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 such as detention, 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
- 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 Principal
- restorative practices
- detentions
- 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 Newham 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

Newham 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- 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

Newham 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

Newham 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/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 Wellbeing and Engagement 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

School Council approval is not required however consultation is mandatory.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy					
Version	Date Created	Date Ratified at School Council (if required)	Revisions Made	Leader of Policy	Next Policy Review
1	Unknown	Unknown	Creation of policy	Julie Souter	
2	July 2018	To be tabled (does not require School Council approval)	Use of new policy template and realigned with DET Guidelines.	Stuart Telford	Every 1-2 years
3	October 2020	October 2020	Change to websites/hyperlinks for DET policies referenced.	Simone Wood	August 2022
4	6/9/22	12/9/22	Changes to wording to align with updates to Child Safety Policy – updated in line with DET guidelines.	Simone Wood	September 2024