

Student Well Being and Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Skipton Primary School on 5340 2002 or skiptonps.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, and
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Student engagement consists of three interrelated components: cognitive, emotional and behavioural. Cognitive engagement relates to a student's investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. Emotional engagement encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school. Behavioural engagement refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.

Skipton 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 helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

OBJECTIVE

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.

POLICY

1. School Profile

Skipton Primary School is situated 50 km south-west of Ballarat on the Glenelg Highway. The school has a long history of providing quality education for the children in the town and farming families in the district. In 2021 it has an enrolment of 78 students.

The workforce consists of 12 staff, including seven teachers, 4 education support staff and the principal. The school has excellent academic results and learning growth. Our Literacy Instructional Model informs our teaching and next year we are refining our Numeracy Instructional Model. We are associated with The Resilience Project with a focus on developing

positive mental health. The school runs a one-to-one computer program with a mix of iPads and PCs. Our specialist programs are science, art, library, sustainability, digital technologies and Auslan.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Skipton Primary 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 respect, integrity, empathy and kindness at every opportunity.

Our vision captures what the school is working towards for our students, which is to become "successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens." We do this by working and learning together, respecting and supporting each other in a productive and caring environment, and seeking to ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Skipton's four core values are: leading and achieving, being responsible, being respectful and caring, and being healthy.

Our school hopes to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy and resilient children. We create successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

Skipton Primary School enacts its vision through the values of:

- Be Respectful and Caring
- Be Responsible
- Be Healthy
- Lead and Achieve

Each value is regularly unpacked with students as part of the learning program. Our Statement of Values can be found on our [school website](#).

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Skipton 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 student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. 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, carers and visitors.
- 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 and 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 Skipton Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, the strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- Carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling.
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, in school assemblies and by communication to parents.
- Student attendance is monitored and attendance improvement strategies are implemented at a whole school, cohort, and individual level.
- Create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs.
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as the Resilience Project.
- Opportunities for student inclusion such as sporting teams, photography competitions, craft groups, music, and camps.
- Buddy programs, peers support programs.
- The school runs a sustainability program designed to foster an understanding of the challenges that confront our environment and ways in which students can take an active role in meeting some of those challenges.
- Robust, well understood and reliable application of policies and strategies designed to minimise the impact of bullying, harassing or abusive behaviour.

Targeted

- Connect all indigenous students with an Engagement Support Officer from an appropriate language group.
- 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.
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background.
- 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.
- Staff will source and engage with specialist educators to 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, see [Student Support Policy](#).
- Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Support Plan.
- Program for Students with Disabilities.

Skipton Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include the following.

- Building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- Meeting with student and their parent or carer to develop strategies to assist the student engage with the school.
- Development of an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan.
- Completing minor structural or environmental works if necessary and reasonable to do so.
- 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.
- Where necessary, the school will support the student's family to engage by
 - being sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing and initiating appropriate action,
 - 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, and
 - 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

Skipton Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school community plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Skipton Primary School uses the following tools, and collects information to assist with identifying 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.

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, and
- 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, and
- 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.

Mentor and peer support

Skipton Primary School has active and successful mentoring and peer support programs. The student mentoring program aims to promote school connectedness, engagement and aspirations.

Each Prep and Year One student is given a “buddy”. The buddy is typically in Grade Five or Six. The buddy

- ensures the new student is made familiar with the school surrounds,
- welcomes and supports the new student,
- increase their engagement with learning, and
- helps build self-confidence and self-esteem.

The peer support program is structured within the classroom, in a safe learning environment. It is designed to

- achieve and maintain a positive school culture.
- empower students to support each other and contribute positively to our school and community. and
- assist with student wellbeing and help develop a supportive learning environment.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

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.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Skipton Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department’s Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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,
- restorative practices,
- behaviour reviews,
- suspension, and/or
- 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 Skipton 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

Skipton Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we 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, and
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families.

8. Evaluation

Skipton 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, and
- SOCS

Skipton 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.

9. 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 the following links.

- [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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was reviewed as part of the October 2021 School Council cycle.

Policy last reviewed	Monday 29 th August, 2022
Consultation	School Council & Policy Sub-Committee
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August, 2024