STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2026

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 9822 7003.

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.

Armadale 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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4. Identifying students in need of support
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POLICY

1. School profile

Armadale Primary School (APS) is located approximately 6.8 kilometres south east of the CBD in the residential suburb of Armadale. We provide equal access to and participation in our curriculum for the range of developmental needs, targeting the teaching, to ensure that maximum growth is achieved for each child. Our school comprises of 2 significant heritage buildings, 2 double storey and single portables, and a modern multi-purpose centre. With upgraded sports courts, a new soccer court with surrounding seating and tables, a large sensory playground, and established kitchen, nature and habitat gardens our facilities cater

to the diverse needs of our students. Our community partnerships are very strong and viable and parent involvement is one of our strengths. Our student demographic is mainly drawn from our local community and local community sports teams use our facilities for training both before and after school. APS offers 255 students' excellent educational provision within our heritage listed site. Our overall socio-economic profile remains low. We have 1 FTE Aboriginal student and 6 students enrolled through the Department's International Educational Division. The staffing profile is made up of 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, Mental Health and Wellbeing leader learning specialist, 16 classroom teachers, and 5 Educational Support Staff.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school's vision is to be an exemplary learning community. We place the highest value on honouring and developing the whole child with the skills, knowledge and dispositions for a lifetime of inquiry. We strive for a culture of excellence for all learners within a nurturing and inclusive community to create a sense of belonging. We value diversity and seek to promote a deeper understanding of our world.

Our values are:

Relationships

Respect

Responsibility

Resilience

Reflection

Please see our school website https://armadaleps.vic.edu.au/ for more information.

Our intent is to provide for the fullest possible development of each learner enabling them to achieve a strong moral purpose and compass and empathic regard for those who they learn with. We aspire to enable children to become curious and independent thinkers; active contributors and global participants who flourish and thrive and enjoy both social progress and emotional wellbeing. We pride ourselves on developing creative and critical thinkers who are flexible, demonstrate adaptive capacity, are innovative, reflective and who work collaboratively to help problem solve and appreciate that making mistakes are a valuable part of learning. We enact a curriculum that meets the needs and interests of children, co-designing a curriculum which provides children with authentic, real, challenging and relevant learning opportunities. Co-designing creates empowerment and agency and promotes the will and motivation for children to achieve their best. Our learning ecology at Armadale Primary sets the conditions that builds coherence across the learning places in the school, ensuring that our children experience high quality, engagement-rich, action-oriented learning experiences. Our committed and dedicated staff learn collaboratively across the school, collecting evidence of each child's learning. Knowing who our students are; and empowering

them in the learning process and valuing learner agency is key to ensuring our students are highly engaged in their learning. Our pedagogical practices focus on enabling the key dispositions of great learners to develop which will equip students for life in the 21st century.

Armadale 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, responsibility and relationships at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Our Statement of Values is available online at https://armadaleps.vic.edu.au/about-us/

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Armadale 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.

- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader works collaboratively with staff, students and families to promote a positive school culture, strengthen student wellbeing, and build staff capacity to support the social and emotional needs of students.
- Implementing a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing through evidence-informed programs, staff professional learning, wellbeing initiatives, and preventative education that supports positive mental health outcomes for all students.
- Monitoring whole-school wellbeing data and coordinating targeted responses and support strategies to address emerging student wellbeing needs.
- Coordinating and supporting the delivery of wellbeing programs including Friendology, Open Parachute, Respectful Relationships, Zones of Regulation, social skills development and other initiatives that promote resilience, emotional literacy and positive relationships.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

- Consistent expectations of everyone in our learning community to engage respectfully at all times.
- Prioritise positive and reciprocal 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, and school level assessment data.
- Teachers at Armadale Primary School use a Pedagogical model 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 Armadale 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 behaviours that model and uphold our values as well as student learning are acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and in communication to parents.
- Monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies if required.
- Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about curriculum implementation and programs through the forums including year group meetings and surveys. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers or the Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for connections across the school through our Buddy program and house sport carnivals, whole school events such as Harmony Day, Book Week and Italian Day.
- 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
    - Restorative Practices
    - UR Strong -Friendology
    - Open Parachute
    - Why worry Wally Transitions
    - Body Safety
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. Zones of Regulation)
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- 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

- All children have someone in the school who is an advocate for their health and wellbeing.
- 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.
- Connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support officer.
- 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 a 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.
- 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 [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

- 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

Armadale 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.
- Be proactive with promoting inclusivity and acceptance of diversity through a range of practices.
- 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 sensory/environmental changes need to be made, for students such as 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 Child First
    - 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 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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Armadale Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader plays a key role in coordinating early identification and intervention processes across the school. This includes working closely with classroom teachers, education support staff, school leadership, students and families to identify emerging wellbeing concerns and facilitate appropriate supports and referrals.

And then the following can be added to the dot points below:

- wellbeing screening and monitoring processes
- referrals from classroom teachers, education support staff, parents/carers and external agencies
- consultation between the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader, classroom teachers, leadership and families to determine appropriate supports and interventions
- analysis of wellbeing, engagement and behaviour data to identify students who may require additional support
- Student Support Group meetings, Individual Education Plans and Behaviour Support Plans

The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Armadale 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 a safe, supportive and inclusive environment free from bullying, harassment,

violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation.
- Express their ideas, feelings and concerns.
- Be nurtured, cared for and respected as individuals.

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.
- Contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and others.

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.

6. 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, Armadale 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 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.
- 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 Armadale 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

Armadale 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

Armadale 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:

- Attitudes to School student survey data.
- Wellbeing incidents data.
- School reports.
- Parent opinion survey.
- Case management.
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data.
- SOCS.

Armadale 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 as annual reference in school newsletter or through COMPASS
- 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
- Child Safe Standards
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Students with Disability
- 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	August 2026
Consultation	Staff, Education Sub-committee of School Council School Community
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2028