



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 Office on 03 9859 4258.

PURPOSE

Balwyn North 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.

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.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Balwyn North Primary School was established in 1950 and is located approximately 12 kilometres north-east of the Melbourne CBD. Our school is situated in a suburban location away from main roads, sharing boundaries with Balwyn High School and The Merrell Kindergarten. Most students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. Each year, a significant number of

families enrol and transfer their children into the school (up to 50 new families in any given year). Most transfers into or out of the school are related to families moving into or out of the area. Balwyn North Primary School has developed close ties to the local community and enjoys support from community groups and services.

Balwyn North Primary School provides educational opportunities for students from Foundation to Year 6. Our staffing profile includes, but is not limited to, Assistant Principals (Wellbeing and Learning), an Enrichment team comprising of Student Learning Support, Student Enrichment and Social and Emotional Learning teachers, first aid trained staff, as well as ongoing support from Department of Education (DE) Student Support Services (SSS) staff. Additionally, Balwyn North Primary School works closely with allied health professionals to support both students and teacher professional learning, including a contractual agreement with Psychology and Speech Pathology professionals. Our school is culturally diverse, with a vast number of our families having a language background other than English (LBOTE). We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

At Balwyn North Primary School, with a focus on positive behaviours for learning, we strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Balwyn North Primary School is committed to providing safe, secure and high quality learning and development opportunities for every student. Students can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture that is fair and respectful to engage and support their learning.

In recent years, Balwyn North Primary School students, parents and staff worked in partnership to develop a Vision and Values for the school.

School Values: *Strive, Inspire, Belong*

School Vision:

In the welcoming environment of BNPS, everyone has a place to be. High expectations for all are achieved through an engaging and progressive approach to education. We foster strong relationships based on mutual respect with an appreciation for our cultural diversity. We value quality teaching and deep learning to build caring and independent future thinkers.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Balwyn North 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. 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.

Balwyn North Primary School is an IB (International Baccalaureate) school, delivering the Victorian Curriculum through the Primary Years Programme (PYP) framework. The PYP focuses on the development of the whole child, both in school and in the world beyond. Our school offers a transdisciplinary experience for students and the whole community and delivers excellent outcomes by providing an education that is challenging, relevant and significant.

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

Universal (Tier 3- all students)

At Balwyn North Primary School, we use a range of whole school strategies to promote engagement with learning, positive behaviour and inclusion. We:

- *engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
 - *Positive Behaviours for Learning*
 - *Resilience Project*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
- *maintain 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*
- *explicitly focus on developing Positive Behaviours for Learning with all students, using the BNPS Positive Behaviours Matrix to focus on behaviour inside and outside of the classroom*
- *continuously strive to create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued*
- *welcome all parents/carers and are responsive to them as partners in learning*
- *develop and maintain Essential Agreements with and between staff and students, to support ongoing positive relationships*
- *analyse and are 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*
- *adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment strategies to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students, following the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching*
- *use consistent teaching and learning designs and collaborative planning to ensure a common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
- *incorporate our School Values and Vision into our curriculum and promote this to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community*
- *carefully plan and implement transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *utilise PAWS in schools Therapy Dog program to support the emotional needs of all students*
- *ensure positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communicate this to parents*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *monitor student wellbeing concerns and action strategies to support at a cohort and individual student level*
- *provide students with the opportunity to contribute to and take action about issues that motivate them. They are supported through student forums, Year 6 Leadership roles, Junior School Council and classroom action inquiries*

- *create opportunities for cross age connections amongst students through extra-curricular opportunities such as Chess Club, musical ensembles and sporting events as well as buddy programs between classes*
- *celebrate and enjoy special events together as a school community, such as the Welcome BBQ, Book Week, Sports Carnival days, School Musicals and concerts and visiting performances that provide further opportunities for connectedness*
- *welcome self-referral of wellbeing issues to teachers, First Aid Officers (Office), Teaching and Learning Leaders (Year Level Coordinators), School Nurse, Assistant Principals (Wellbeing and Learning) and 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*
- *welcome parents and carers as active participants in their children's learning through Meet the Teacher meetings, written reports, Learning and Wellbeing Conferences with classroom teachers, student portfolios, performances and Year 6 Exhibition*
- *engage, where needed, external programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour*
- *offer opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities including Peaceful Play sessions)*
- *implement cooperative learning structures to support students to develop collaborative learning skills*
- *offer a sequenced camp program from Foundation to Year 6, where students have the opportunity to develop increasing levels of independence and enjoy a diverse range of life experiences*
- *emphasise teaching and learning strategies that offer a range of individualised and personalised experiences, to meet the needs of students*
- *support students to share their progress in learning, reflecting upon and celebrating their achievements with parents or carers, through student portfolios and Learning and Wellbeing Conferences with classroom teachers*
- *put in place measures 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*
- *parental participation and engagement is encouraged through membership of School Council and its subcommittees and the Parents and Friends' Association*

Targeted (Tier 2 – specific groups of students)

At Balwyn North Primary School:

- *each cohort (year level group) has a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of teachers led by a Teaching and Learning Leader (TLL), who maintains collective responsibility for the learning and wellbeing of students in that year level, while also being the point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *we have a Support and Enrichment Professional Learning Community of teachers including a teacher to provide Learning Support, a teacher providing Social and Emotional Learning, a teacher to support English as an additional language and a teacher to support student enrichment for high ability learners*
- *we welcome all Koorie students and support them with a Marrung Lead teacher*

- *our English as an additional 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 including through maintaining a program of inquiry which acknowledges and celebrates our many cultures*
- *we offer structured transition experiences into and beyond our school aimed to minimise anxiety, increase resilience and ensure students make successful transitions between different stages of schooling*
- *implement programs such as Peaceful Kids and other focus groups (including a focus on speech pathology) run by allied health professionals and Wellbeing staff to support student development*
- *provide small group opportunities for students to work with our Therapy dog*
- *parental involvement as classroom helpers is supported by a learning series for parents about the teaching and learning program at BNPS*
- *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](#)*
- *we support staff to undertake professional learning in first aid, health promotion, wellbeing and social skills development in response to needs identified in wellbeing data*
- *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](#)*
- *we develop student leadership through our formal year 6 leadership program and attendance at leadership conferences for selected students*
- *provide opportunity for students to gain experience with student Leadership through Junior School Council program*

Individual (Tier 1 – individual students)

At Balwyn North Primary School, we have in place a range of strategies to support the engagement and attendance of individual students. These can include:

- *building positive 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*
- *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing aspects of the learning space*
- *developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan*
- *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*
- *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*

- *referring the student to:*
 - *School based wellbeing supports*
 - *Student Support Services (SSS)*
 - *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, Balwyn North Primary 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*
- *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

Balwyn North 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. Balwyn North 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 data*
- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
- *student wellbeing and behaviour 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 Vision and 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 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

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in Balwyn North Primary School's Vision and 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, Balwyn North 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.

Our school considers, explores and implements 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 logical consequences, such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to inappropriate behaviour*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *referral to the Teaching and Learning Leader, or a member of the School Leadership Team*
- *restorative practices*
- *behaviour reviews*
- *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.

The Principal of Balwyn North 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

Balwyn North 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/carers 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

Balwyn North 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*
- *Compass chronicles*
- *case management*
- *CASES21, including attendance and absence data*
- *Student Online Case System (SOCS)*

Balwyn North 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 and on Compass under the School Documentation section*
- *included in staff induction processes*
- *included as annual reference in school bulletin*
- *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 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:

- BNPS Bullying Prevention Policy
- BNPS Communication with School Staff Policy
- BNPS Child Safety Policy
- BNPS Child Safe Code of Conduct
- BNPS Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- BNPS Digital Technologies Policy
- BNPS Complaints Policy
- BNPS First Aid Policy
- BNPS Privacy Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	3 rd September 2024
Consultation	Consulted with families via Bulletin 29/8/24

Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	September 2026