Colac South West Primary School 4775

Respect Engage Achieve Care Honesty

Colac South West Primary School is a Child Safe School

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Colac South West Primary School 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, supportive, calm and orderly learning environment for students
(b) expectations for positive student behaviour
(c) support available to students and their families
(d) **Colac South West Primary School's** policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Colac South West 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.

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 of Respect, Engage, Achieve, Care and Honesty.

SCOPE

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

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POLICY

1. School profile

Established in 1959, Colac South West Primary School provides opportunities for all students to achieve to a high standard in a supportive, challenging and engaging environment. The school has outstanding facilities to complement the effective classroom and Specialist programs within the school.

In 2022, Colac South West Primary School continued the work of the current Strategic Plan (2022-2027). This plan is focused on improving student outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy P-6. In particular a focus on high quality instructional practice, to develop student interest and motivation in learning and to enhance student wellbeing in a learning environment that is safe, calm and orderly which is reflective of the school's values has been established.

School enrolment for 2026 was 147 at the time of census. The Student Family Occupation (SFO) index was 0.7367 and the Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.5339 in 2025 which classifies Colac South West

Primary as having a high level of social disadvantage. In 2025 there were 11 Koorie students, 9 EAL students and 41 NCCD Enrolments.

Students access all Key Learning Areas and our students participate in a variety of specialist programs including Physical Education, Visual Arts and Indonesian. Our curriculum is complimented by extra-curricular activities including excursions and camps, special event days, sporting activities and other community-based programs. The school has made a commitment to provide in-school and out of school cultural experiences for our students through visiting performances and excursions.

The school has outstanding facilities to complement our education programs including a modern multi-purpose learning module which houses a half court gymnasium, Art and Music Rooms and kitchen facilities.

Staff, students, parents and the community share a vision that is linked to our core values of Respect, Engage, Achieve, Care and Honesty, or the acronym – R.E.A.C.H.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Colac South West'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, Engage, Achieve, Care and Honesty at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to provide opportunities for all students to achieve to a high standard in a supportive, challenging and engaging environment where all members proudly display the values of Respect, Engage, Achieve, Care and Honesty in order to equip them with the necessary skills and values to prepare them for the future.

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Colac South West 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.

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

Universal

- Adoption of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support across all year levels which sets high and consistent expectations for 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
- 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 Colac South West use a consistent instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction which ensures that evidenced-based teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Colac South West 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, with a particular emphasis on the transition from kindergarten to primary school and from primary school to secondary school

- 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 Junior School Council and other forums involving leadership groups such as House Captains and School Captains. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Student Welfare Worker, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the celebration of special days such as athletics and scheduled Buddies sessions
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Chaplain, Assistant Principal 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
- we engage in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Respectful Relationships
    - Better Buddies
    - Explicit teaching of the REACH matrix
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support 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

- classroom teachers monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- The Respectful Relationships curriculum (including The Resilience Project as of 2026) is delivered to each Year Level and is targeted to their specific age 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 using the Colac South West Primary School Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan.
- connect all Koorie students with the Koorie Engagement Support Officer for the area
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment if required
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- 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 including through our school's alignment with the Geelong English Language Centre Cluster Program
- 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 LGBTIQA+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQA+ 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

Department of Education and Training resources and personnel are utilised to support individual students these include:

- *Student Support Groups* (held once per term) for all students who are in Out of Home Care, identify as Koorie or are on the Program for Students with a Disability or Disability Inclusion
- *Individual Education Plans*
- *Behaviour - Students* plans
- *Behaviour Support Plans*
- *Student Support Services* referrals

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- Program for Students with Disabilities
- *Mental health toolkit*
- *headspace*
- Navigator
- LOOKOUT

Colac South West 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 Learning 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:
    - school-based wellbeing supports
    - Student Support Services
    - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services

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
- 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

Colac South West 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. **Colac South**

West 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 and behaviour monitoring data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have the right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and honesty. 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 learning
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment that is 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 our school values of Respect, Engage, Achieve, Care and Honesty 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 set out in our REACH Matrix. 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 Colac South West Primary School's Bullying Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards outlined in our REACH Matrix, Colac South West will institute a staged response, consistent with our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support and the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the 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.

Actions that may be taken 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, including withdrawal from the yard or special occasions such as excursions and extra-curricular activities
- restorative practices
- referral to the Assistant Principal/Principal
- detentions
- behaviour reviews which may result in a behaviour support plan being produced
- internal or external 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 **Colac South West 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

Colac South West 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 or a hard copy on request
- 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, such as;
    - holding Open Nights, Welcome BBQs and special breakfasts for Mother's and Father's Day
    - twice yearly formal parent teacher meetings
- 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 in developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Colac South West 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, including Student Attitudes to School Survey
- incidents data as recorded on SWIS and Compass
- school reports

- Parent Opinion Survey
- case management of students with individual learning plans relating to their social and emotional needs
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS referrals

Colac South West 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 in transition and enrolment packs
- 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/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
- Student Engagement
- Child Safe Standards
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Students with Disability
- LGBTIQA+ 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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy Created on	17th November 2022	
Consultation	School Council – February 2026 Staff – February 2026	Community – February 2026
Approved by	Xavier Davis, Principal February 2026	
Next review date	February 2028	