



# STUDENT WELLBEING AND 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.

Guthrie Street 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.

## SCOPE

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

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## POLICY

1. School profile

*Guthrie Street Primary School was established in the 1970s and is situated to the south end of Shepparton and is surrounded by a residential area. Our enrolment trend has been relatively stable fluctuating between 450-500 with a 2022 enrolment of 456 students.*

*The school has a variety of learning spaces within its buildings, a combination of single classrooms, adjoining rooms and more open flexible spaces.*

*Guthrie Street Primary School has a diverse student and community population. The community comprises many different cultures and has students from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. In recent years the school's population of EAL students has slightly increased and there has been an increase in the population of socially and economically disadvantaged students. The school also has strong representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.*

*Guthrie Street has a Deaf Facility Annex which supports hearing impaired students from Shepparton and surrounding areas. AUSLAN is the School's LOTE program and other specialist programs offered include: The Arts, Physical Education and Science.*

*Guthrie Street Primary School is a school dedicated to providing purposeful, stimulating and challenging learning experiences to help our students achieve personal success and develop healthy social and emotional competencies. Education is a cooperative effort amongst school, home and the community which emphasises learning as a continuous process to help ensure the best educational performance by our students.*

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

*The school has a strong EQ program that has 5 pillars/values that guide and influence behaviours across the school community. The culture of Guthrie Street Primary School has changed so that EQ is part of our everyday being. The 5 EQ pillars are:*

- *Self Motivation*
- *Self Control*
- *Self Awareness*
- *Empathy*
- *Building Relationships*

*The school has also embedded the core values the Resilience Project into our EQ program of Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness along with DET Respectful Relationships initiative.*

*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 people.*

## **3. Engagement strategies**

*Guthrie Street 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.*

### Universal

- *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*
- *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 Guthrie Street Primary School use the Reader's and Writer's Workshop 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 Guthrie Street 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 values 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*
- *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 the Student Voice Team and other forums including class meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, sport, athletics and our Foundation/Year 6 Buddy Program*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the School Nurse, 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*
  - *Emotional Intelligence Program*
  - *Resilience Program*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*

### Targeted

- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *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*
- *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*

### Individual

- *Student Support Groups for students in need, see: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>*
- *Individual Learning Plan, Behaviour Support Plan and Trauma Management Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to psychologist*
- *referral to Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *referral to Department of Human Services case managers and support workers*
- *C.A.S.A (Centre Against Sexual Assault)*

*Guthrie Street 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, a Behaviour Support Plan and/or a Trauma Management 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*

*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 Plans 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*
  - *who are of Koorie or Torres Strait Islander background*
  - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

#### **4. Identifying students in need of support**

*Guthrie Street Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Guthrie Street 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 and suspension data*
- *engagement with families*
- *Koorie or Torres Strait Islander background*
- *refugee or ESL status*
- *presence of a physical disability or learning disorder*

## 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 Social and Emotional Wellbeing Manual outlines the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- learn and achieve to their individual potential
- be rewarded for hard work and effort
- be accepted as an individual
- be treated and spoken to fairly and respectfully by teachers, students and parents
- learn and play in a clean and tidy environment
- have appropriate access to school facilities and equipment
- feel safe in the school environment

Students have the responsibility to:

- allow others to learn and play without interference
- contribute to the best of their ability in all school activities
- accept others as individuals with differing backgrounds, personalities and interests
- treat and speak to teachers, students and parents in a fair and respectful manner
- keep our school clean
- listen to and value others opinions and ideas
- use our school facilities and equipment in a careful and acceptable way
- contribute to the physical and emotional safety of people in our school
- play safely within the designated areas around the school
- be in control of their own thoughts and feelings, and make strong choices
- come into class at the beginning of the day and after each break on time

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.

## 6. Student behavioural expectations

*Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Social and Emotional Wellbeing manual. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Guthrie Street Primary School's Bullying policy.*

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Guthrie Street 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:*

- *a warning given that their behaviour is inappropriate*
- *moving students to a new spot in their classroom*
- *moving students to another classroom*
- *sending students to the office to see Principal staff*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *restorative practices*
- *rethink*
- *behaviour reviews*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

## **7. Engaging with families**

Guthrie Street 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

Guthrie Street 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 (Attitudes to School Survey)
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management data

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

*Student Management Policy and Procedures*

*Guthrie Street Primary School's Social and Emotional Wellbeing Manual*

Key Link connected with this policy is: [DEECD - Child Health and Wellbeing](#)

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on the 27th of May 2022.