



# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY

## UNIVERSITY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

### 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.

University Park 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.

### CONTENTS:

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

### POLICY:

#### 1. School profile

**University Park Primary School (UPPS)** is situated in the City of Brimbank, St Albans, 20 kilometres west of Melbourne. The school opened in 1972 and is located between an established residential area, St Albans South, and the extensive residential estate of Cairnlea. We have 277 students enrolled from Foundation to Grade 6 and 32 school staff members.

Our school is surrounded by a supportive local community, and enjoys support from our local shops and community services, including Brimbank City Council. We have developed close ties with the local kindergartens through our Better Buddies Program, which ensures our Foundation students are well prepared for their first days at school.

Our school is culturally diverse with 43% of families having a language background other than English (LOTE). The largest LOTE groups are Vietnamese and Chinese (Mandarin), with representation from 29 different non-English speaking backgrounds. We are proud of our wide cultural and socio-economic diversity and inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

## 2. School values and vision

University Park Primary School's Statement of Values 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, honesty, collaboration and learning at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to work collaboratively to ensure every individual learns to their full potential and is a respectful and responsible member of the school community.

## 3. Engagement strategies

University Park 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 (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

### Universal

Whole of school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion include:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising 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
- delivering a broad curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum and ensuring that learning is tailored to students' interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at University Park Primary School using a Gradual Release instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high impact teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at University Park Primary School adopting 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 being 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
- providing opportunities for student voice and agency, including participation in Council led projects which are student directed.
- carefully planning transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitoring student attendance and implementing attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Providing students with the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through Student Leadership opportunities including School Captains, Class Captains, Junior School Council, and Environmental Leaders. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- creating opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the Better Buddies Program and athletics.

- Encouraging students to self-refer to their teachers, Assistant Principals 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
- Engaging in school wide positive behaviour supports with our staff and students, including programs such as:
  - UPPS Start, including explicit teaching of expectations using the School’s Positive Behaviour Matrix
  - Zones of Regulation
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Friendship Saver
  - Community Circles
- Offering programs, incursions and excursions developed to address specific behaviours or issues (Bully No Way)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities, community Service)

### Targeted

More specific strategies, designed to address particular concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles include:

- teachers making referrals directly to the Assistant Principal – Student Engagement and Wellbeing, and working collaboratively to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their class
- connecting Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- responding to the needs of identified groups with programs that provide targeted support (Social Skills sessions, Canine Comprehension)
- ensuring all students in Out of Home Care are appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and are referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- providing all staff with access to professional learning focussed on wellbeing and health as identified through the needs of classroom teachers and student wellbeing data.

### Individual

Student specific strategies that may be considered and applied on a case by case basis include:

- [Student Support Groups](#) – meetings held each term, and include all members of the care team
- [Individual Education Plans](#) – updated each term at SSG meetings
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#) – as required and developed collaboratively with teachers and parents
- [Student Support Services](#) - referrals discussed weekly in Key Contact meetings with the Assistant Principal – Student Engagement and Wellbeing

as well as referrals or applications to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

University Park 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 students 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, 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 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**

University Park Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The School Improvement Team (SIT) team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. University Park 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
- referrals to the Assistant Principal – Student Engagement and Wellbeing, made by school staff or 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 an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that comply with and model school values
- demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community.
- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

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 and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with University Park Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, University Park Primary School will implement agreed upon Behaviour Management processes, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. 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 withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Behaviour Management processes 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. Behaviour Management processes at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

The UPPS Behaviour Management processes follow a staged response as follows:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate and explicitly stating expected behaviours
- Relocating the student within the classroom and recording the behaviour on a Behaviour Record Sheet (BRS)
- Relocating the student to another classroom with the BRS and a reflection sheet to support the student to identify and address their behaviour
- Withdrawal by leadership in instances where the behaviour is ongoing, disruptive and dangerous to the student or others

Other strategies that may be used in conjunction with Behaviour Management processes include:

- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to Leadership
- restorative practices, including re-engagement, re-direction or re-teaching as required and appropriate
- detentions for part of lunchtime or recess
- 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 University Park Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

## 7. Engaging with families

University Park 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
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

University Park 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, including attendance and absence data

## 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
- 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:

*Statement of Values*

*Bullying Prevention*

*Child Safe Standards*

*Communication with School Staff*

## REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION:

This policy was last updated in [June 2021](#) and is scheduled for review in [June 2024](#)  
Approved by School Council on ???