Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy

Toolamba PS

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Toolamba PS 0358265212

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.

Toolamba 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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POLICY

1. School profile

Toolamba Primary School is situated in the small rural community of Toolamba, which is 19 kilometres south of Shepparton and 181 kilometres north of Melbourne. The school dates back to 1894. Its history includes a relocation in the 1980s, a fire in 2010 and subsequent rebuild completion in 2012.

The community displays pride in its history and works together to achieve a shared vision for the future: "Striving for Excellence." High expectations are reflected through the school values of Trustworthiness, Kindness, Respectfulness and Inclusiveness. Our school motto is, "Where Everyone Counts."

The main building consists of administration and employees areas, six classroom spaces, flexible learning areas and a multipurpose space. An additional two classrooms are located in a relocatable building. The school has a dedicated Visual Arts room. The town's Kindergarten and Maternal Health Centre are located on the school grounds. The grounds include structured playgrounds, hard and soft surfaced areas, an oval and an imaginative bush play area. Our students benefit from supervised access to the community hall, tennis courts, sporting oval and nearby bushland. The school operates an accredited Out of School Hours Care Program. Toolamba Primary School is an active participant in the local community.

The 121 pupils, reside within the township or the outlying catchment area which is serviced by two buses. 0% of students had English as a second Language and small percentage identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The school has a low to medium level of socio-economic disadvantage. The staffing profile of Toolamba Primary School includes a Principal, Vice Principal the full time equivalent of 9.8 teachers and seven part time Education Support Officers.

The school provides a curriculum framework based on the Victorian Curriculum and is differentiated to meet student needs. Students are offered weekly specialist teaching in Visual Arts, Physical Education and Science.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Toolamba 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, employees and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, inclusiveness, kindness and trust at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to "Strive for Excellence."

Our Statement of Values is available online at: www.toolambaps.vic.edu.au/documents/

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Toolamba 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.

A summary of the whole of school, targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Whole School

- High and consistent expectations of all employees, students, parents and carers
- Prioritise positive relationships between employee and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive as well as one 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, student management data and school level assessment data
- Teachers at Toolamba Primary School use a documented 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 Toolamba 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 is incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, employees 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 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 Junior School Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teacher and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, 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 school employees are partners in learning

- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our school employees and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Respectful Relationships
    - Safe Schools
    - Urstrong
- 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
- 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.
- Wellbeing Leader

Targeted

- Each year level group has a Coordinator, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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
- 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
- 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 school employee's members will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school employees each year
- School employees 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

Toolamba 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, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
    - 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 an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- Engaging with our regional Koorie Education 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

Toolamba 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. Toolamba 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 employees 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, employees, 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, 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 toolambaps.vic.edu.au/documents

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

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, Toolamba 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 employees.

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 eight or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Toolamba 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

Toolamba 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
- Parents and Friends Committee
- 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

Toolamba 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
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Toolamba 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 toolambaps.vic.edu.au/documents

- Included in employee 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
- LGBTIQ 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 Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2026
Consultation	School Council April 2026

	School Community via Newsletter June 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2028