



FOOTSCRAY WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL

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.

Footscray 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, 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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1. School profile

About Us

Footscray West Primary School, located in Melbourne's inner western suburbs, is a warm and inclusive community of around 650 students, supported by a dedicated team of approximately 65 staff, equal to approximately 43 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. Our families come from many cultural and social backgrounds, and we proudly celebrate the diversity that makes our school such a vibrant place to learn. The school's current SFOE is 0.1762, which is considered a low level of disadvantage. Ensuring the emotional safety and wellbeing of every child is at the heart of our work.

As a Science of Learning school, we use clear and evidence-based teaching to help every child succeed. Our early years programs, including Little Learners Love Literacy and EMP (Explicit Maths Program), give students a strong start, and our specialist areas, including Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, Library and STEM add richness and breadth to the curriculum.

Student wellbeing is supported through the Berry Street Education Model, Respectful Relationships, and strong social-emotional learning routines. Our staff, across leadership, teachers, and education support roles, work closely together to create a calm, supportive, and engaging learning environment. Families are valued partners, and parent involvement is encouraged and welcomed.

Students enjoy spacious outdoor play areas and excellent facilities including a stadium sized gymnasium and dedicated Music, STEM and Library spaces.

Our vision of **'Working together to create a better world'** and the values of **Belonging, Respect, Responsibility, and Resilience**, guide our actions every day.

At Footscray West Primary School, we believe every child can thrive when supported by a caring community, high expectations, and strong, evidence-based teaching. We are committed to collective professional learning in teaching, learning, and wellbeing, which is grounded in research and supported in practice.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Footscray West 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, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values at every opportunity.

Footscray West Primary School aims to actively engage the school community to work and learn together in a supportive and inclusive environment. The school's vision is 'Working together to create a better world' which is facilitated through empowering our students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as young adults.

The following four core values underpin the way we work together to bring our vision to life and are facilitated through the Berry Street Education Model and Respectful Relationships:

- Belonging
- Respect
- Resilience
- Responsibility

Our statement of Values and School Philosophy is available on our website.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Footscray West 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 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:

Our whole of school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion are:

- maintaining high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students through the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM), recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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
- staff implementing the VTLM 2.0 to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction ensures that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- 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 with Pupil of the Week awards and communication formally and informally to parents

 Positive Behaviour Expectations				
	 BELONGING	 RESPECT	 RESPONSIBILITY	 RESILIENCE
In classrooms	Build positive relationships Be inclusive Acknowledge strengths and differences Cooperate with others	Be kind Use manners Listen attentively Let others learn	Be ready to learn Apply personal best effort Use space and equipment correctly Make positive choices	Bounce back from mistakes Don't give up Practise positive self talk Help seek when needed
During transitions	Move together Allow space for others Support others	Move quietly and sensibly Follow routines Listen to instructions	Care for your own and others' belongings Be ready on time	Be patient Accept and adapt to change
In the yard and around the school	Take turns Include others Treat others the way you want to be treated	Respect everyone's personal space Be fair Care for equipment	Look after our environment Don't litter Look out for others	Compromise and take turns Agree on and follow the rules of play Try new things
At all times (in school and the community)	Speak kindly (no put downs) Have a go Try your best Move safely Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself			
	Listen to others Follow instructions Stand up for yourself and others Take care of all school property			

The Berry Street Education Model

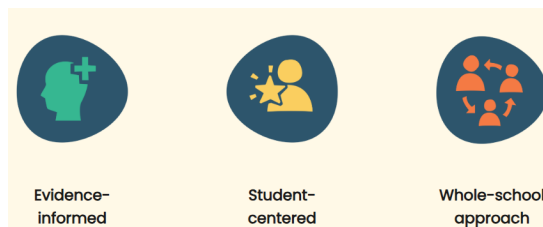
- monitoring student attendance and implementing attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- providing students the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council , Environment Team , Marrung Team and other forums including year group meetings and peer support groups.

- putting measures 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.

- creating opportunities for student inclusion and sense of belonging through lunchtime clubs and school, buddies, sporting teams.

Maintaining an active Child Safety and Wellbeing Team to promote the curriculum aspects of wellbeing including:overseeing the implementation of programs such as:

- Respectful Relationships
- Consent Education
- Inform and Empower



INFORM&EMPOWER
Cyber Safety & Digital Wellbeing

Targeted:

Our targeted strategies to address particular groups of students or concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles include:

- having a level leader for each year group; a senior teacher responsible for their year who acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support and communicates with the Wellbeing team

- having an established and experienced Child Safety & Wellbeing Team who meet weekly to determine groups of students needing further social, academic and /or wellbeing supports and responding to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff

- staff applying a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma through the Berry Street Education Model.

- supporting Koorie students to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our [Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\)](#) for further information

- supporting our English as a second language students through explicit tier one instruction in our classrooms, and supporting all cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) students to feel safe and included in our school through our school values.
- providing a positive and respectful learning environment for our students and families who identify as LGBTQIA+ and following the Department of Education policy on [LGBTQIA+ Student Support](#)
- supporting all students in Out of Home Care in accordance with the department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a learning mentor, having an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- supporting students with a disability 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. This includes consultation with families and where mandated, Student Support Groups meetings and Individual Education Plans .
- supporting students enrolled under the department's international student program in accordance with our legal obligations and department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

Individual:

Footscray 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
- having a dedicated Mental Health & Wellbeing Leader who can direct families to appropriate external supports such as Orange Door or CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- meeting with students and their parents/carers to talk about how best to help the students engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- 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 The Orange Door
 - 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
- liaising, where appropriate and with the permission of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student externally
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with disability that is funded through the Disability Inclusion Profile process

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|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ in Out of Home Care○ who identify as Koorie |
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4. Identifying students in need of support

Footscray 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Footscray West 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
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- mandated Student Support Groups and Individual Education Plans for OoHC, Koorie and DIP students.

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 and School Philosophy 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 and management

At Footscray West Primary School violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination is not 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, Footscray West Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents and carers will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Responses to behaviours are in line with whether the behaviour is considered to be minor or major as outlined at the end of this document in Appendix 1: Minor and Major behaviours.

For minor behaviours, our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student regulation, reflection and repair whilst enabling other students to continue to focus on their learning. Repeated minor behaviours and major behaviours will result in serious consequences using a staged approach.

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
- referral to the year level coordinator
- 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:

- [Suspensions Policy](#)
- [Expulsions Policy](#)
- [Restraint and 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 Footscray 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

Footscray West Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we 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/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff Policy.
- providing parent/carer volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for mandated students.

8. Evaluation

Footscray West Primary School collects 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 are assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- Compass chronicles
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Footscray West Primary School also regularly monitors 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
- Made available in hard copy from the school office 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 policies and resources are relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Expulsions](#)

- [Koorie Education](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Suspensions](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Approval date (by):	July 2026 by Principal
VRQA policy:	Yes
DET mandated policy:	Yes
School Council input:	Recommended
Consultation:	Community Consultation, July 2026
Next scheduled review date (review cycle):	July 2028 (2 years)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact a member of the Footscray West Primary School Principal Team on 9687 1535 or footscray.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au



At Footscray West PS we are a community of safe, respectful learners.

We demonstrate this through our values of:

BELONGING – RESPECT – RESPONSIBILITY – RESILIENCE

Minor Behaviours

Defiance – Purposefully refusing to follow teacher instructions, school expectations or refusing to participate when required.

Disrespect – Speaking in a rude manner, talking back to staff, lying, cheating or rude gestures.

Time wasting – Not arriving or returning to class in a reasonable timeframe.

Not being in the right place, at the right time – Being out of bounds, not going where the staff member tells you to go, going into unsupervised areas (inside and outside).

Disrupting – Interrupting, calling out, distracting yourself and/or others from learning, being out of your seat or spot on the floor without reason, being off task.

Physical – Playful but inappropriate behaviour/contact.

Physical contact – Touching another student without their consent.

Aggressive behaviours not directed at another person – Such as ball kicking, stepping on people's belongings, destroying sandcastles.

Inappropriate language – name calling/teasing, gossiping, roasting, being unkind verbally, socially rude, swearing (non-targeted and non-confrontational), use of non-age appropriate language, writing inappropriate notes.

Unsafe movement – Running inside, moving unsafely on stairs, running around corners, running through walking only areas, riding bikes/scooters in the school ground, not walking calmly between spaces.

Petty theft – Taking or using an item that belongs to someone else, including items from the lost property area which are returned, touching another student's property without permission.

Property damage/misuse – Low-level or repairable damage of school or peer property (e.g. drawing on table, breaking pencils), taking or using an item without permission (e.g. pencil, ruler, ball), using school resources unsafely or inappropriately.

Misuse of technology – Not using technology for its intended learning purpose, using technology without permission, using unapproved apps or accessing unapproved sites, failing to hand in phone or smartwatch on arrival at school.

Manipulation – Influencing others negatively, forcing someone to do something, excluding others.

Major Behaviours

When a minor behaviour is repeated more than two times in one week, or an emerging pattern is appearing.

Significant risk taking / unsafe behaviour – Engaging in behaviour that involves substantial or potentially severe risk to your personal safety, the safety of others or the surrounding environment.

Absconding – Deliberately leaving the agreed upon boundaries (classroom, school, etc.) without permission and supervision.

Inappropriate contact – Inappropriate touching of peers or staff, rough play, tackling, pushing, punching, kicking, biting, shoving, touching others without consent, touching of private parts.

Harassment – Verbal comments or physical actions that make others feel uncomfortable, invasion of privacy of students or staff, defamation, vilification or degradation of others.

Discrimination – Negative words or actions based on race, religion, gender, sexuality or ability, hate speech.

Aggression (physical or verbal) – Intentionally causing harm to others, threatening or aggressive physical or verbal behaviour directed at another person, swearing with intent or when directed at someone, use of aggressive derogatory language, behaviour of a sexualised nature.

Bullying – Repeated physical, verbal, social or psychologically aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

Theft – Possessing, having passed on, or being responsible for stealing someone else's property.

Property destruction – Causing any form of damage to property or the environment, intentionally or due to negligence, by someone who is not the owner of the property, graffiti.

Significant ICT breach – Phone or smartwatch use at school, taking photos/sharing images of others without their consent, watching or sharing explicit content online, using another person's account, cyberbullying, creating or sharing deepfake images, identity theft, any inappropriate use of technology that has a direct impact on the safety or wellbeing of yourself or others.

Illicit substances and weapons – Possessing, selling or using illicit substances (including vapes, cigarettes), possessing or

