**WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

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**DERINYA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school’s policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Derinya 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**

*Derinya is a large thriving government school located in Frankston South, the gateway to the Mornington Peninsula. With a student enrolment of 874 students and a high socio–economic profile. We strive to develop compassionate global citizens through shared values and high expectations who think creatively and are responsible and caring lifelong learners. Our school has 38 straight classes and we have over 70 dedicated, passionate staff who are committed to continually maximising the academic potential and wide-ranging achievements of our students in a safe, prosocial, caring and happy environment. We live our overarching school values daily. Our amazing, valued community at large takes great pride in developing a strong partnership in order to promote excellence in all. Our buildings date back to 1970. We have developed a new master plan and in term 4 2020 we commenced a $4.8 million dollar development providing 10 new classrooms in a double storey configuration as stage 1 of our building upgrade. The school buildings whilst neat and well maintained offer a variety of different learning spaces.*

*Our extensive curriculum continues to be underpinned with a sharp focus on literacy and numeracy and is supported with quality levels of challenge in teaching and learning to enhance the differentiated academic growth of all students. Students are encouraged to think creatively about the world they live in, inquire with curious minds and care for the earth, giving their best effort at all times. We encourage student responsibility for learning, goal setting and reflection. Staff collaborative team planning and professional learning are key drivers of improved learning and teaching and we have an extremely stable and talented staff committed to maximizing student potential. Our engaging Specialist Programs include Visual and Performing Arts, PE, Japanese and Science. A multitude of co-curricular programs and initiatives enhance the learning opportunities of students, engaging them in a diverse range of activities both within and beyond the classroom, school and world, linking them through a multitude of networks of like minds. Innovation and creativity are celebrated and there are many opportunities to develop student leadership, voice and agency. We have several students participating in the High Ability and Student Excellence programs.*

*The positive staff, student and parent surveys endorse excellent performance of our school as a highly effective learning community. We are ever growing in our quest for excellence and continue to strengthen our practice through research and professional development with a focus around the State Education Initiatives and targets.*

*A strong focus on information technology further enhances and supports student engagement and learning, and is well resourced providing an excellent tool for learning. We have an extensive, highly successful co-contribution iPad program making devices accessible for all. Derinya is a sustainable school. It is eSmart accredited and this supports our community values and responsibilities in ensuring we have cybersmart students and informed teachers and parents. Our parent body is particularly keen to continually update its parenting skills of keeping children safe on line and the school works collaboratively with parents to this end.*

*The school plays an important role in the Frankston South community celebrating strong links with our wonderful parent body and local networks. Through the tremendous work of the School Council, our Parents Association – the Community Connect Team, staff and students, a harmonious, engaging and productive learning community is nurtured. The Parent Survey endorses the excellent work being undertaken at our school. Our annual Derinya Art and Craft Exhibition features highly on the Victorian Arts Calendar. Our school works as a Community of Practice with the Frankston Federation of Schools and Northern Peninsula Network. At Derinya, our community works collectively to achieve our potential and create a positive, vibrant centre of life learning. The growth of the school is testament to its success.*

**School values, philosophy and vision**

Derinya Primary School recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

This Statement of Values sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Our Statement of Values acknowledges that parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

1. **Engagement strategies**

*Derinya 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.*

*The Derinya GEM (Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness) program, developed by our student health and well being team caters for the pro social and emotional development of all children through explicit classroom teaching. Our efforts in social and emotional learning are highly valued and ripple through the school continually. The school has access to a Medicare funded psychologist support on site who is an absolute asset to our school community.*

*The school has journeyed successfully through the COVID pandemic supported by underlying strength in teams, professional structure and practice. Our staff and parents went above and beyond to make remote and flexible learning as successful as possible and our school values have been reflected in all of our actions. Our children will fare well and there are several aspects the school will continue to develop in the future.*

Our Whole School strategies encompass:

* *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*
* *deliver a broad curriculum program that is tailored to student’s interests, strengths and aspirations*
* *teachers at Derinya use the LEARN Model 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 Derinya 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 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*
* *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 Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
* *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through our Buddies Program, school plays, athletics, music program, lunchtime programs and peer support programs*
* *All students are welcome to self-refer to their Year Group Leaders, 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*
* *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
  + *Respectful Relationships*
  + *Bully Stoppers*
  + *Safe Schools*
* *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. zones of regulation for emotional growth and self-awareness)*
* *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*
* *buddy program*

*Targeted Strategies used within Derinya include:*

* *each year group has a Year Group 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.*
* *Transition coordinators in both foundation and grade 6 work extensively with the local schools and care centres in our community to create a positive plan for all students in their transitionary periods.*
* *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer and IEP*
* *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
* *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*

*Derinya 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 Orange Door, 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*
* *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.*

1. **Identifying students in need of support**

*Derinya Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Executive Team, SIT team and all teachers play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Derinya 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*
* *families that reach out for further support due to changing circumstances. Eg: family separation, loss of a family member, impact on family circumstances due to reasons such as COVID etc.*

1. **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 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 home class teacher and/or parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

1. **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 Derinya Primary School’s Bullying policy.*

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Derinya 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 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.*

*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, 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 Derinya 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.

1. **Engaging with families**

Derinya 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.

1. **Evaluation**

Derinya 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
* SOCS

Derinya Primary School will also regularly monitor that 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
* Do we want to write that we include it 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](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/guidance/1-suspension-process)
* [Expulsions - Decision](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/guidance/decision)

**Further information and resources**

policies including *Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards*, are available on our school website.

## **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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| Policy last reviewed | August 2021 |
| Consultation | School Council |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | August 2023 |