MIDDLE KINGLAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Middle Kinglake Primary School, 5786 1295.

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.

Middle Kinglake 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.

CONTENTS

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

POLICY

1. School profile

Middle Kinglake Primary School is situated on the Southern fringe of Victoria's North Eastern Ranges. It is sited in the semi-rural area of Kinglake, which is approximately sixty kilometres from

Melbourne. The school celebrated its Centenary in 1998 and has a proud sense of tradition with strong ties to families in the area. There is a clear and strong sense of community at Middle Kinglake Primary School with a very able and effective School Council and a strong PFA at its core. Networking and building upon established links with community groups and the broader community ensures that there is a sound base of voluntary support for the school and its programs. This support is evident in the very healthy level of fundraising that has a high degree of parental involvement and commitment.

After building a steady growth in enrolment from 2000 to 2009, the school building was destroyed by the 2009 February 7th bushfire and one-third of the school community's families lost their homes as well. The school was located on a temporary site for some time after the bushfires and moved into the new building in 2011. The current enrolment is around 70 students. The new building is an open plan and the students work in four grades.

Our inclusive curriculum has a strong literacy and numeracy basis and an additional focus on the Arts. Specialist teachers are currently provided in Music, Auslan, STEM, a Library program and Social and Emotional Learning, which facilitates our involvement in The Resilience Program. Teacher expertise is used in rotation to provide all classes with Phys Ed, Sustainability and Art. We also have Literacy and Maths Intervention as part of our tutoring program. Our whole school inquiry units incorporate the Australian Cross-Curriculum priorities of Sustainability, Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. Instrumental music is offered in keyboard, drums, banjo and guitar as well as singing. Each year a group of students participates in the Boite Choir culminating in a performance at the Melbourne Town Hall together with 300 students from a variety of other schools. Within our learning programs we endeavour to focus on sustainability and environmental aspects at school as well as within the community.

There is a strong commitment to developing a safe and secure learning and playing environment for all of our children. Our school welfare program incorporates a whole school buddy system together with our whole school social skills program called "Middle Mates" which is linked to a weekly award system "Student of the Week". We also have a Wellbeing Leader focusing on Mental Health in Primary Schools.

The LOTE provided is Auslan – sign language, which is taught to all of the children. There is a rich variety of excursions, performances, visitors, camps and special programs to support and enhance the school curriculum. We incorporate visitors to the school, as often as possible to support our own programs. We hold ANZAC and Remembrance Day services each year and have built strong ties with local RSLs and their members.

Middle Kinglake Primary School has an extensive Sustainability program which includes the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program. Our school is an accredited Resourcesmart school. Each year students are involved in the Kids Teaching Kids program. We have a vegetable garden, chooks, recycling program and a worm farm. Students participate in weekly "Sustainability" sessions and we hold a school goal of having 'Nude Food' lunches to cut back on waste within out school. We continue to develop the grounds in our school setting and build links with community groups such as Landcare.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Middle Kinglake 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 values of Safety, Respectfulness and Responsibility.

Our School's vision is to prepare young people to actively participate in the learning and social environment around them. We aim to equip students with skills and knowledge that will allow them to excel in an ever changing 21st century. We want them to be inquisitive, resilient and mindful members of the community.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Middle Kinglake 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 school), targeted (classroom specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

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 and 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 Middle Kinglake Primary School use the Workshop 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 Middle Kinglake 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 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 Junior School Council and other forums including Student Voice meetings in their classrooms. Students are also encouraged to speak with their*

teachers, Principal or other staff members whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and our Buddy program.*
- *all students are welcome to self-refer to the Wellbeing Coordinator or 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*
    - *Middle Mates*
    - *The Resilience Project*
- *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.*

Targeted

- *each classroom teacher has a responsibility to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their class, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *Koorie 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 – refer to our Aboriginal Learning Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan for further information. Students are also able to connect with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *Our English as an Additional Language (EAL) students are supported through our EAL program, and all culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students are supported to feel safe, valued and included in our school community. This is achieved through inclusive classroom practices, celebration of cultural diversity, differentiated learning programs, strong partnerships with families, access to interpreters and translated information when required, and the promotion of respect and understanding across the school community.*
- *We support the learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds through individualised wellbeing and learning support, targeted EAL assistance, trauma-informed practices, close collaboration with families and external support services, and by fostering a welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe environment where students can develop a sense of belonging and actively participate in school life.*
- *we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQA+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQA+ 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 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*
- *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*
- *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*

Individual

- *Student Support Groups*
- *Individual Education Plans*
- *Behaviour - Students*
- *Behaviour Support Plans*
- *Student Support Services*

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- Program for Students with Disabilities
- *Mental health toolkit*
- *headspace*
- Navigator
- LOOKOUT

Middle Kinglake 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*

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 Engagement 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

Middle Kinglake Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Our school community plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Middle Kinglake 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*

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, 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

The first step in facilitating standards of positive behaviour is communicating those standards to all students. At Middle Kinglake Primary School , we emphasise the importance of directly teaching students behaviours appropriate for school. Communicating behavioural expectations is a form of universal behaviour support- a strategy directed towards all students designed to prevent problem behaviours and provides a framework for responding to unacceptable behaviours.

A set of behavioural expectations in specific settings has been attached to each of our three school rules. The Schoolwide Expectations Teaching Matrix below outlines our agreed rules and specific behavioural expectations in all school settings.

	ALL AREAS	**CLASSROOMS**	**PLAYGROUND**	**CARE OF SCHOOL PETS**	**TOILETS**
BE RESPECTFUL	Use equipment appropriately Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Use manners	Walk Enter and exit room in an orderly manner Allow others to learn Be honest	Participate in school approved games Wear shoes at all times Be Sunsmart; wear a broad brimmed hat	Handle pets carefully Treat pets with respect	Respect privacy of others; Flush toilets and keep basins clean for others Use toilets as they are intended to be used
BE RESPONSIBLE	Ask permission to leave the classroom Be on time Be in the right place at the right time Follow instructions straight away	Be prepared and organised Complete set tasks Take an active role in classroom activities Keep work space tidy Ask permission to use others' belongings	Be a problem solver Return equipment to appropriate place at the end of recess and lunch times	Report concerns about pets Assist with regular cleaning of the pets and their homes	Use toilets during breaks Ensure paper towel is placed inside the bins provided
BE SAFE	Respect others' personal space and property Care for equipment	Raise your hand to speak Respect others' right to learn	Play fairly – take turns, invite others to join in and follow rules;	Walk quietly around cages Sit with pets	Wash hands Walk

	Clean up after yourself Use polite language Wait your turn	Talk in turns Be a good listener	Use the playground equipment safely; Care for the environment		

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, Example 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 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*
- *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.

The Principal of Middle Kinglake 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

Middle Kinglake 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

Middle Kinglake 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
- SENTRAL, including our 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
- 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 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
- LGBTIQA+ 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 and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2026
Consultation	School Council 23/6/2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2028