



**Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 9481 5577.

**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.

Westgarth 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 students 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

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	1 of 10

## **Policy**

### **1. School profile**

Westgarth Primary School is located in the inner city suburb of Northcote approximately eight kilometres north of the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was founded in 1924. The school is located on two adjacent sites. The Junior School and administration centre are located at the Brooke Street site and the Senior School and specialist facilities are at the Clarke Street site. Buildings include refurbished open planned learning spaces, studio learning spaces, modular five portables, a kitchen garden cooking centre and an indoor gymnasium. School grounds include a kitchen garden, playgrounds at both sites, two soccer pitches, three basketball courts and areas for passive play and seating. There are approximately 590 students enrolled.

The staffing profile of Westgarth Primary School includes a Principal and Assistant Principal, 27 classroom teachers for 25 classes, seven specialist teachers, seven Education Support (ES) staff and a first aid officer.

The school provides an approved curriculum framework aligned to the Victorian Curriculum. There are specialist classes in performing arts (music), visual arts, physical education and sport and a kitchen garden program. Spanish is integrated through content and language integrated learning (CLIL) within the visual art program. The school provides an accredited Out of School Hours Care Program and sporting opportunities. The school has a visiting psychologist, speech therapist and links with allied health services to meet the needs of students and families. External consultancy services are available for families on site. The school community supports the school through partnerships in school programs, fund raising events and social events.

### **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

Westgarth 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 of respect, integrity, excellence, working together and responsibility at every opportunity.

Our philosophy is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

Our school's vision is to 'foster a community that empowers everyone to be their best' and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	2 of 10

The Westgarth Primary School values were developed in consultation with staff and parents:

Respect – We appreciate diversity and the worth in others

Integrity – We aim to be consistently honest and trustworthy

Excellence (being your best) – We accept the challenge of new learning and always try our best

Working together – We work with others to achieve and promote the involvement and contribution of all

Responsibility – We recognise we are accountable for our actions towards ourself, others and the environment.

### **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Westgarth 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 universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

#### Universal

- implement compulsory Child Safe standards to protect children from harm
- 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
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships
  - Safe Schools
  - eSmart
  - Berry Street Education Model
- consistently promote the 'be safe, be fair and be friendly' motto

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	3 of 10

- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey (AToSS), parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Westgarth 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, such as our Quality Beginnings program
- thorough induction program for new staff to be scaffolded by members of the School Improvement Team (SIT)
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom and formally communicated to parents
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including school captains, house captains meeting. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through the school musical, sporting opportunities and buddy grades
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principal 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
- incursions and excursions developed to address cohort specific behaviour (in connection with well-being excursion levy)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. interschool sports teams, recess and lunchtime activities).
- 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

- the engagement and wellbeing leaders on each site monitor students throughout the year 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

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	4 of 10

- Our English as a second language, students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- 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](#) and Transend Plans developed with student input
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through use of interpreters and our Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be 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
- 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

Westgarth 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 (ILP) and/or Emotional Regulation Plan (ERP)
- 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, which may include connecting with external supports such as psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers, Headspace child and adolescent mental health services or Orange Door formally Child First.
  - Lookout

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	5 of 10

Where necessary the Westgarth Primary 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
  - with funding
  - in Out of Home Care
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring
  - engaging with our regional Koorie engagement support officers.

#### **4. Identifying students in need of support**

Westgarth Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The School Improvement Team (SIT) plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies that help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Westgarth Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- emotional regulation plans
- individualised support plans
- engagement with the student's family
- 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
- Compass chronicle data
- Referrals from classroom and Literacy Support staff
- Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES)

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	6 of 10

## **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.

All 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.

All 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**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy and 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, Westgarth Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. 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.

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	7 of 10

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 a member of the leadership team
- restorative practices
- in school time out
- 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 Westgarth 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**

Westgarth 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

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	8 of 10



- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communications with School Staff policy
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.
- involving families with the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program (SAKGP)
- involving families in school decision making, such as via Education Sub-Committee
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families

## **8. Evaluation**

Westgarth 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
- incident data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Westgarth 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.

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 is available in our Complaints Policy.

## **Communication**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website. [Click here](#) to view.
- Included in staff induction processes

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	9 of 10

- 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, [click here](#) to view policies on the school website:

- 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	August 2022
Consultation	Education Sub-Committee 23 August 2022 School Captain meeting 19 August 2022 School Council meeting 31 August 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:	Page:
August 2022	Principal	August 2024	10 of 10