

## Emerald 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.

Emerald 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 helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability and all vulnerable children.

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.

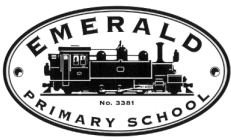
### CONTENTS

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. Child Safe Environment
9. Evaluation

### POLICY

#### 1. School profile

Emerald Primary School draws its students from the Emerald township and the neighbouring communities of Avonsleigh, Cockatoo, Upper Pakenham and Clematis. A number of students also travel from further afield, their parents having determined that Emerald Primary School



best satisfies the educational needs of their children. The school recognises the importance of the partnership between school and home and welcomes parent participation that includes membership of School Council and assistance with classroom programs, excursions, gardening programs, sporting events, working bees and various fundraising committees.

The school has an established culture of consultation and participation in relation to decision-making. Teachers involve their students in the development of class rules, and have created an environment where students have real and authentic voice, which in turn impacts classroom processes and assessments. Students are also encouraged to have agency over their own learning, setting goals and tracking their progress throughout their time here. The Student Action Team also analyses parts of the Student Attitudes to School Survey and identifies opportunities for improvement. They create surveys to gather data to inform their actions.

Student opinion about a range of issues is canvassed through the Student Action Team. Regular Staff, Literacy Committee, Numeracy Committee, PLC, Year Level Teams and Consultative Committee meetings allow all of the teaching and ES school staff to participate in the decision making processes at Emerald Primary School. School Council provides a forum for parent participation.

The school is a founding member of EDEC (Emerald District Education Community), a network comprised of the local secondary college and its feeder schools. For many years EDEC has been a source of collegiate support and a vehicle for a range of sporting and cultural events that have fostered positive relationships between the member schools.

Emerald Primary School takes pride in its role in the local community, forging strong links with many organisations. Local sporting groups readily share their amenities and all community groups are welcome to make use of school facilities. This has included the Hills Ukulele Festival, community use of our Stadium facilities, the Kitchen Garden program, and several acknowledgements and student awards from neighbouring organisations. Proximity to the Puffing Billy train line has influenced aspects of school life. Puffing Billy appears on the school logo and the school's motto, "On Track for Success", acknowledges our connection to an important local icon.

Emerald Primary School has served its community for more than a century. The contribution of past generations to the building of a strong school culture and community spirit is reflected in the naming of our four school houses after families who have supported our school through several generations. Family representatives preserve the connection by presenting badges and awards at assemblies and graduation ceremonies.

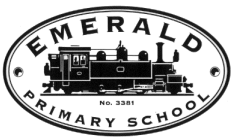
The Emerald Primary School community values the pursuit of success and the building of a school environment in which respect and friendliness are reflected in the activities of all. It is a strongly held belief that if staff, students and parents act in accordance with these three simple values we will build a school culture of which we can be justly proud.

### **Respect**

- Treat yourself and others with respect
- Be respectful of your possessions, the possessions of others and the environment
- Be respectful of the beliefs and traditions of all

### **Friendliness**

- Adopt a friendly approach in your dealings with students, teachers, parents and visitors to the school



### **Success**

- Approach each new task with a desire to succeed
- Celebrate the success of self and others
- Understand that, in the pursuit of success, the journey is as important as the destination

Developing the wellbeing and engagement of our students is central to our role as a school and is reflected in our whole school philosophy. We recognise that there are three areas of engagement; behavioural, emotional and cognitive and we therefore seek to provide an environment where all students are able to develop to their full potential in each area. Our school values of Friendliness, Respect and Success are actively promoted throughout the school. A culture of mutual respect, positive encouragement and reinforcement permeates all facets of school life.

**Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.**

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

*Emerald 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 and kindness at every opportunity.*

*Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.*

## **3. Engagement strategies**

### **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY:**

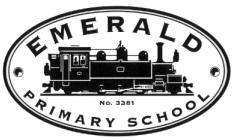
Our school philosophy guides our decisions and how we work at Emerald Primary School. It is the foundation of our school culture.

### **OUR MISSION STATEMENTS:**

- We are here to maximise student outcomes and the future success of our students.
- Education has intellectual, economic, social, physical, emotional and spiritual value.
- Each person is a unique individual who needs a secure, caring, and stimulating atmosphere in which to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially.

### **OUR VISION:**

Everyone at EPS should have the opportunity to learn and grow so as to ultimately reach their full potential.

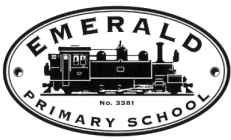


## OUR VALUES:

We value the building of a school environment in which Respect, Friendliness and the pursuit of Success are reflected in the activities of all.

### 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*
- *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 to ensure that programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers at Emerald Primary School use the EPS instructional models 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 Emerald 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 Action Teams and other forums including year group student forums. 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 Buddy Grade program, colour run, music programs and lunchtime activity programs*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the School Chaplain, Wellbeing Leader, 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, staff and families are partners in learning*
- *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
  - *Respectful Relationships*
  - *Setting Up For Success*



### Targeted

- *each classroom teacher is responsible for their class, who monitor the health and wellbeing of each students , and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan*
  
- *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 (ie. School Nurse program, eyesight checks, Life Education Program)*
- *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*

### Individual

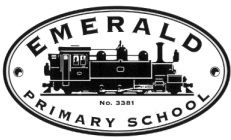
- *Student Support Groups, see:*  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spaq/participation/pages/supportgroup.s.aspx>
- *Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities/DIPs*
- *referral to Wellbeing Leader, Chaplain and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *LookOut*
- *KESO*

*Emerald 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*

*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*
  - *with indigenous background*
  - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

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

*Emerald Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Emerald 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*
- *Child Link data*

#### 5. Student rights and responsibilities

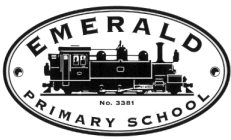
All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

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, 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.

## 6. Student behavioural expectations

*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 Emerald Primary School's Anti Bullying/Bully Prevention policy.*

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

*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 Assistant Principal and/or School Chaplain*
- *restorative practices*
- *yard removal*
- *behaviour reviews*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

**Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:**

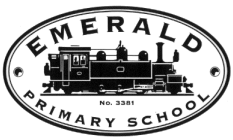
**<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>**

**Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.**

**Restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, please see the Department's [Restraint and Seclusion Policy](#) .**

## 7. Engaging with families

Emerald 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 protocols
- 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. Child Safe Environment

Emerald Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Emerald Primary School has a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse. We support and respect all children as well as our staff and volunteers. Emerald Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people feel safe, and their voices are heard when decisions are made that affect their lives. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability or who are vulnerable. We want all children at this school to be safe, happy and empowered. Every person involved in Emerald Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make. We have legal and moral obligations, which we follow rigorously, to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety.

In its planning, decision-making and operations, Emerald Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues.

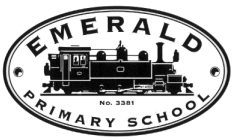
Please refer to the Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct, Commitment to Child Safety statement and Risk Assessment.

## 9. Evaluation

Emerald 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 on Chronicle with the Compass database
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- Child Link data
- DIPs data

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For more information please see the following policies available on the Emerald Primary School website:

- EPS Anti-Bullying Policy
- EPS Child Safety Policy, including Commitment to Child Safety statement, Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment
- EPS Complaints Policy

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023 and is scheduled for review in July 2025.