
MILGATE 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
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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.

Milgate 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.

IB Standards and Practices:

As an IB World School, we are committed to the following:

- The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support. (0202-02)
- The school implements and reviews systems and processes to identify the needs of students. (0202-02-0100)
- The school supports the identified needs of students, and evidences this support through planning, policy, and practice. (0202-02-0200)
- The school provides staff, facilities and resources as outlined in their inclusion policy. (0202-02-0300)
- The school demonstrates a commitment to make the most effective use of learning spaces and learning environments in ways that meet the needs of all students. (0202-02-0400)
- The school fosters the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03)
- The school identifies and allocates spaces and resources to support the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03-0100)

- The school demonstrates in its systems, processes and policies attention to the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03-0200)
- The pedagogical leadership team and teachers support students' social, emotional and physical well-being. (0202-03-0300)
- The school promotes open communication based on understanding and respect. (0202-03-0400)
- The school provides relevant support materials, resources and structures to promote access to the school's programme(s) for as many students as reasonable. (0301-01-0200)
- The school provides opportunities to access the programme(s) for the broadest possible range of students. (0301-01-0300)
- The school articulates and demonstrates the PYP to include all students, regardless of learner variability, unless the school's regulatory environment precludes full enrollment and requires the school offer the relevant national or state/provincial curriculum to certain students. (0301-01-0311)
- The school implements the PYP across all early years and/or primary grade levels offered at the school. (0301-01-0312)
- The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews an inclusion policy that creates cultures that support all students to reach their full potential. (0301-02)

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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POLICY

School profile

Milgate Primary School challenges our learners to be inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective. To ensure our learning community is developing learners with these qualities, Milgate's quality teaching and learning is founded upon the principles of Constructivist Learning aiming to engage learners in meaningful inquiry that encourages students to pose and explore questions.

Milgate is an accredited International Baccalaureate World School offering the Primary Years Programme (IB PYP). Our focus is on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

Milgate's Learning community is underpinned by strong school community partnerships. The cohesive relationships within our school community celebrate and demonstrate the values we, as a society, attest to (49% of students come from countries outside Australia). Parents are actively involved in the planning and provision of our classroom programs including specialist programs, and parent groups. Student, staff and parent contributions are recognised, valued and essential to the success of our school.

School values, philosophy and vision

Milgate Primary School's vision is to provide a dynamic, inclusive learning environment that challenges students to become inquirers, thinkers and caring young people who are able to interact in the global society with respect and intercultural understanding

Milgate Primary School's values are based on those from the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP). The IB Learner Profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Inquirers: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-Minded: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-takers: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional- to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Milgate 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), identified (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students, 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 Milgate 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 class meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through Milgate Mix-ups
- we engage in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Child Wise
 - Positive Education
- Using the SWPBS framework to develop a fortnightly focus, which is communicated to the wider school community
- Tiered Response Model is used by all staff to explain and respond to behaviours that are 'not nice', 'mean' and 'Bullying'
- 'Who we are' inquiry is a year long inquiry
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour
- daily classroom mindfulness and gratitude practice across every classroom
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs and student initiated lunchtime clubs
- 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

- identified groups of students to work with Milgate Primary School's therapy dogs, to develop their social and emotional skills
- Social Skills lunchtime club for specific students
- Social Skills Program for students who require Tier 2 supports in order to develop their social, emotional and communication skills
- 'Who we are' inquiry running annually allowing for teachers to identify specific small group or cohort needs
- Peaceful Kids running each term with a group of 4-6 students selected by classroom teachers
- fidget toys and calming spaces in each classroom
- SWPBS team members 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
- 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
- our English as an Additional 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 support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background
- 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 \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)

- all students in Out of Home Care will be supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) 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
- 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
- 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](#)

Individual

Milgate 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 the 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
- 'Check and Connect' for disengaged and/or disconnected students
- 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
 - On Psych

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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- 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.

Identifying students in need of support

Milgate 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. Milgate 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

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.

Student behavioural expectations and management

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 Milgate Primary School 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, Milgate Primary 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
- timeout and completing a reflection sheet with a member of leadership
- 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 Milgate 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.

Engaging with families

Milgate 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
- 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.

Evaluation

Milgate 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
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data

- SOCS

Milgate 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.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website and on Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in the school newsletter

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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:

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	08/2024
Consultation	School Council, School Leadership, Y6 Student Leaders
Approved by	Principal & School Council
Next scheduled review date	08/2026

