

## **Park Ridge Primary School Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy May, 2025**

### **Rationale**

Park Ridge Primary School is committed to providing high quality education and preparing young people to become active, engaged and responsible citizens of the local and global community. The school aims to prepare students to contend with a very dynamic 21st century in which creativity, cooperative work, connectedness to the world and adaptability are key features.

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.

Park Ridge 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.

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.

### **Aim**

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

### **Implementation**

#### **School Profile**

Park Ridge Primary School is located in the North-Eastern Victoria Region, Outer Eastern Melbourne Area. The school is situated on a 3.6-hectare site on the south-eastern border of the City of Knox, within the suburb of Rowville.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

#### **School Values, Philosophy and Vision**

Park Ridge Primary School's Vision Statement and School Values are integral to the school's culture and underpin the foundation of the school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live by and demonstrate the school's core values at every opportunity and to support the school's overarching purpose and aspirations, which are articulated in the Vision Statement.

## *School Vision*

*We are helping our students develop the knowledge and skills required to become life-long learners, putting them on the path to become successful, happy individuals who are active and valued citizens in their local and global communities.*

## School Values

The Park Ridge Primary School values represent the guiding principles and beliefs of our school community. Our school values are:

Respect – *accept, value and appreciate others and our differences and treat others the way you would like to be treated.*

Resilience – *being able to control your emotions, overcome challenges and believe in your ability to achieve.*

Positivity – *developing a growth mindset, being grateful and putting your best effort into everything you do.*

Integrity – *always do the right thing, own your mistakes, be honest and make good choices.*

High Expectations – *encouraging and supporting all members of our school community to strive for excellence.*

## Engagement Strategies

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

### Universal

#### Park Ridge Primary School:

- has high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers.
- prioritises positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing.
- fosters a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive.
- welcomes all parents/carers as partners in learning.
- analyses and is responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey, student management and school level assessment data.
- ensures teachers at Park Ridge Primary School use the Instructional Model to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction, to ensure that evidence-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- ensures teachers at Park Ridge 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.
- incorporates its Statement of Values into its curriculum and promotes it to students, staff and parents, so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community.
- carefully plans transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling.
- acknowledges positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, formally at school assemblies and through communication to parents.
- monitors student attendance and implements attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.

- gives students the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Learning Leaders, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- creates opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through peer support programs.
- enables students to self-refer to the Year Level Learning Leaders, Assistant Principal (Wellbeing) 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.
- engages in school-wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Berry Street Education Model
  - School Wide Positive Behavior Support
  - programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue-specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
  - opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
  - buddy programs
  - peers support programs.

### Targeted

#### At Park Ridge Primary School:

- Each year group has a Year Level Learning Leader 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.
- 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.
- 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

Park Ridge 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 students and their parent(s)/carer(s) to talk about how best to help the students 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 Child First.

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.
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - supported by the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) or Disability Inclusion
  - in Out of Home Care
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

### Identifying Students in Need of Support

Park Ridge Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Park Ridge 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
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance data/records
- 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 Vision Statement and School's Values highlight 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.

### Student Behavioural Expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Vision and Values. When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Park Ridge 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 Year Level Learning Leader
- referral to Assistant Principal (Wellbeing) or Principal
- restorative practices
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy.

- Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and principals must consider alternative interventions and supports for students before proceeding to suspension as the appropriate action.
- Only a principal (including an acting principal) of the student's enrolled school has authority to make the decision to suspend a student. This authority cannot be delegated.
- Detailed requirements exist for the suspension process and it is essential that principals refer to the full mandatory Suspension Guidelines and Procedures
- Only principals have authority to make the decision to expel a student. This authority cannot be delegated.
- Principals must not expel a student who is aged 8 years or less without the Secretary's approval.
- Detailed procedural considerations and requirements exist for the expulsion process and it is essential that principals refer to and follow the full mandatory expulsion guidelines and procedures

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

### Engaging with Families

Park Ridge 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

Park Ridge 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
- SOCS

### **Communication**

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings
- Included in staff handbook

### **Related Policies and Resources**

The following policies can be accessed by the following link -

<https://parkridge-ps.vic.edu.au/policies/>

- Bullying Prevention
- Inclusion and Diversity
- School Philosophy Statement

### **Review and Evaluation**

This policy was last approved by the School Council May, 2025 and is scheduled for review in May, 2026.

<b>Policy:</b>	Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy		
<b>Date Approved:</b>	May, 2025	<b>Person Responsible:</b>	Education Committee / Principal
<b>Date for Review:</b>	May, 2026	<b>Date Updated on Policy Index:</b>	May, 2025