

## STUDENT WELLBEING & 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.

Cowwarr 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.

### SCOPE

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

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### POLICY

**School profile-** Cowwarr Primary School is situated in the small town of Cowwarr in Gippsland. It has at present 29 students and is growing rapidly. Our students come from a mixture of family backgrounds and demographics. They come from farms, small holdings and towns including Toongabbie and Heyfield. Some students have a long family history connected to Cowwarr Primary with parents and even grandparents attending. Many of our new students are here because of our reputation of high standards in education and student welfare.

Cowwarr Primary School is a school that caters for individuals within a 'TEAM' environment. The students refer to it as a family and feel that they belong. Because we are isolated and students interact with less people it is imperative that a school is inclusive and we work really hard to promote inclusion in our school.

The teaching and learning model is interactive and focused on individual needs. It is a model which includes parents, and is highly communicative. It works on the premise that a community is needed to bring up a child. The model in the classrooms is assessing individual progress and encouraging growth by affirmation and praise. It is a positive learning model.

Within the classroom we work in small groups and teach concepts. The children enter the concept and assess the skills at their level and this is repeated throughout semesters and years. The model allows for a learning intention to be



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explored and achieved by every child. The model allows for individual goal setting and provides a plan for future learning. The model requires lots of verbal communication and research, which includes the children's interests and individual choices.

Our curriculum is comprehensive. Daily speaking and listening, reading and writing make up our literacy focus. This includes reading and writing workshops, personal reading, personal writing, VCOP writing and 'Talk Time'.

Numeracy is also taught using the workshop model and backed up with technology. The technology includes individual laptops for each student for monitoring personal progress and individual testing. The remainder of the curriculum consists of the arts, science and technology, inquiry learning concepts and personal learning time (PLT). The programs that run alongside these basic elements are environmental (garden) breakfast and healthy eating and the explicit teaching of our team values of Respect, Responsibility, Resilience, self belief and Belonging.

Finally our culture is one of inclusivity. Learning is an individual venture and should be non competitive. This means that everyone has a place to enter the learning environment and need not be anxious. The team is a resource to help each individual student to reach their personal goals and prepare for a successful future. Teachers, parents and students make up the learning team which is recognized as a positive influence by the children.

The Cowwarr Primary school culture is positive, affirming and based on praise and affirmation because every child in our team is unique and special.

## School values, philosophy and vision-

### Mission

Cowwarr Primary School provides a purposeful, productive and comprehensive education of the highest quality, working in partnership with the school community. The school aims to provide quality experiences that empower students to live in, and contribute to, a changing society. Cowwarr strives to develop in students, the ability to work as members of a TEAM in cooperative learning environments, and to appreciate the worth of individual differences. The school promotes a supportive TEAM culture which guides students towards becoming responsible, independent citizens who care about themselves and their environment.

### Vision

Cowwarr Primary School empowers all students to embrace learning, achieve their personal best and build their emotional, social and physical well-being.

### Values

Respect – Caring about yourself and others.

Responsibility – Able to be trusted and relied upon.

Resilience – able to keep trying. Can view mistakes in a positive way as an avenue for learning.

Self Belief – Has an 'I Can' attitude and individual goals.

## 1. Engagement strategies-

Cowwarr 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.

To realise our mission and vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or



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as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

The school provides a rich extra-curricular program to cater for the needs of all students as well as providing a rich and diverse range of experiences to keep students motivated and engaged. These activities also provide opportunities for parents and members of the community to be actively involved in students' learning.

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## 2. Identifying students in need of support-

Cowwarr Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Cowwarr 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*
- *Individual Learning Plans*
- *Behaviour Support Plans*

## 3. 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.

## 4. 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 our Bully Prevention policy.

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success. Cowwarr Primary School has implemented the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program since 2012, as part of a Network-wide approach with the Wellington Network. This approach focuses on ensuring that positive student behaviour is acknowledged and encouraged, as well as providing an effective method to monitor, manage and work to improve negative student behaviour. Student behaviour is tracked and recorded by staff in the classroom, playground and bus. Trends in behaviour are discussed with teaching staff, including the Principal, and strategies put in place to implement a whole school approach to positively managing and improving the trended negative behaviour.

Behavioural expectation matrices have been developed in the following areas which clearly outline expectations for student and staff behaviour -

- Learning areas
- ICT/Cyber/Device Usage
- Staff (meetings, conduct)
- Playground

Positive acknowledgements are designed to be collaboratively achieved and provide opportunities for all students to achieve a collective success.

Cowwarr Primary School seeks to build a positive and inclusive learning environment where all students have the opportunity to experience success. This is supported through inclusive teaching and learning practices and a whole school behaviour management approach. When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Cowwarr 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 challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Restorative Practice discussions with students involved
- Withdrawal of privileges (computer/i-Pad usage; play time)
- Time out in the classroom / or another teacher's classroom
- Letters or verbal apologies written/given
- Individual behaviour management plans
- Counselling
- Clean up duties / amend damages
- Notifying parents of behaviours and future behaviour plans
- Involving community support agencies
- Suspension (in-school and out of school)
- Expulsion within the DET guidelines

Discipline will be applied in a way that is appropriate to the behaviour and upholds the processes of School Wide Positive Behaviour in promoting positive behaviour and applying an appropriate consequence and counselling for negative behaviours.



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Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the principal (or person acting in that role) and Boisdale will follow the process for applying these disciplinary measures set out in the Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance <http://education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance/asp>

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that Boisdale will follow are available from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/discipline.aspx>

**Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used, nor tolerated in any circumstance.**

## 5. Engaging with families

Parent involvement is positively encouraged through a range of opportunities. Parent feedback and opinion is sought through the Parent Opinion Survey and through the avenues of School Council representation, Parents and Friends Committee participation and involvement in the classroom, parent information session, as well as sporting and swimming activities and events.

### School Council

Parents become actively involved in the decision making process through membership of school council. The group meet once a month to oversee finance, building and grounds with sub committees involved in canteen, parents club and marketing.

**Parents Club** are an active parent body supporting events and activities for students as well as fundraising for the school. They enjoy their own facility in one of our historic buildings and oversee the ordering and sale of the uniform.

**Parents in classroom partnerships** offer their help in a variety of programs including gardening, cooking, classroom activities, Bike Brigade, excursions, camps, PMP, swimming and special events. Their ongoing support is a highly valued aspect of our school life and the school actively fosters an "Open Door" policy.

**Working bees** offer opportunities to take an active role in school maintenance and development. Parent contribution and skills are highly valued within the Cowwarr Primary School community.

**Parent teacher interviews** are held twice throughout the year (Term 1 and towards the end of Term 2 or early Term 3). These provide an opportunity for students, teachers and parents to discuss learning progression and areas for further development.

The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.

## 6. Evaluation-

Data collection and analysis-

Behaviour data from the playground and classroom is collected each week and documented using a checklist form to indicate the type of behaviour, response and the timeframe. This data is then collated using a school based database, which can produce reports which are then discussed with staff and parents as appropriate. This data will be used to identify target areas for improved student behaviour and measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some of the sources of data regarding wellbeing issues, behaviour and otherwise, used are:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data



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- school level report data
- Parent Survey data
- data extracted from CASES21 or SOCS

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For further information please refer to our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* policy, *Bullying Prevention* policy or *Child Safe Standards*.

## REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on September 2020 and is scheduled for review on September 2024.