

Dandenong West
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Dandenong West Primary School

Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school administration office on (03) 9792 2868 or via email at

dandenong.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au

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.

Dandenong West 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.

Scope

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

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1. School profile
2. School values, guiding principles and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
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5. Student rights and responsibilities
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7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

Policy

1. School profile

Dandenong West Primary School very proudly serves Australia's most culturally diverse community. The school offers a rich history of excellence in teaching that extends from 1925 through to today.

Our student numbers are typically between 275 and 300, this number is influenced by immigration patterns, rental pricing and availability. At Dandenong West Primary School we seek to meet the needs of the community we serve. Our view of education is expansive, while student learning is our core business we recognise this does not happen in isolation

from families and the wider community. We have high aspirations for our students, as do their families. Our programs are designed to enhance student learning, support families by providing access to services and learning opportunities, and to foster participation within the wider community.

Our programs are designed to meet the needs of a large group of students whose families are recently arrived in Australia. The majority of our students' families originate from South Asia, with the rest mainly from areas of Africa, Europe and other parts of Asia. Most of our students speak a language other than English at home. We expect all staff to develop positive relationships with our students, their families and more widely; we understand that life is a process of continuous growth, and growth itself is a process of learning through making meaningful connections.

Our teachers work in teams to provide an exciting and engaging learning program designed to meet students' individual learning needs. Our Well-Being Team work alongside teachers to ensure students are happy, safe and ready to learn and to support students and families. Dandenong West has developed a range of innovative opportunities to engage families and the wider community with the school.

We have an established 'Community Hub' onsite that draws together local information and services around education, health, community and settlement into a familiar and friendly place for parents. It aims to help families create friendships, support networks, and develop a sense of belonging while supporting the building of the social capital to engage parents and carers with the school and student learning.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Dandenong West 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 Honesty, Empathy, positive Attitude and Tolerance (HEART) at every opportunity.

Our vision is to empower every child to reach their highest possible academic, social, and personal achievement potential, within a community-minded school recognised for excellence.



Our Statement of Values is available online at - <https://www.dandenongwestps.vic.edu.au/>

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Dandenong West 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.

Dandenong West 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.

High quality teaching, inclusive, differentiated and engaging curriculum and respectful relationships between staff and students continue to be a focus through professional learning. A key component of the school's approach to prevention is teaching positive behaviours and the use of logical consequences to address both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Our Student Wellbeing focus is that of our School Vision: to inspire a passion for learning that motivates us to live life with enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

At the beginning of the school year, all classes start with establishing a classroom culture of respect, belonging, co-operation and positive relationships. This supports our whole school Behaviours and Expectations which provides a clear, consistent approach. Each student engages with the Student Code of Conduct in a child-centred, developmentally appropriate, learning environment that recognises, fosters and promotes the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each child. We understand that many children have unique wellbeing and learning needs and we are committed to addressing these needs.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies or Tiered Approach used by our school is included below:

Universal (Tier 1)

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents/ 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 (formative and summative) such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and Personal and Social Capability school level assessment data
- teachers at Dandenong West Primary School use DWPS instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices such as HITS, are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Dandenong West 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 HEART 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
- Ready for School and Transition teams have carefully planned the Foundation and 6/7 Transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Berry Street's positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- the attendance team monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leader, Wellbeing team, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through choir, dance troupe, Chill Out, LEGO club, athletics and peer support programs, lunchtime social clubs and after-school sports programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Leader, Chaplain, Youth Worker, Year Group Leaders, 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
- we engage in Personal and Social Learning with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Berry Street Education Model
 - Restorative Practices
 - 4Rs (Remind, Redirect, Relocate, Restorative)
 - Circle time
 - Bounce Back / Social Stories
 - Brain breaks
 - Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/capabilities/personal/Pages/respectfulrel.aspx>
 - Schools Standing up to Racism, CMY
 - Cultural Intelligence
 - all students from P-1 will be assisted to develop a classroom Ready to Learn Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan to enable a student to de-escalate and become ready to learn
 - all students from 2-6 will be assisted to develop an Individual Ready to Learn Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan and enable a student to de-escalate and become ready to learn
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. Grip leadership programs, PLAY Leaders, anger management programs, mental health programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. Koorie focus groups, Pacifica groups, African group sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities, Chill Out, choir, Boys Group, Girl Guides, Social Skills group, dog therapy group for PSDMS students)
- buddy programs, peers support programs, local kinder reading programs
- Professional learning to empower our school community to understand and teach inclusion, gender equality, build health relationships, identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment through Respectful Relationships, CMY Schools Standing Up to Racism, Adam Voigt – Restorative Relationships, Berry Street Education Model

Targeted (Tier 2)

Our Wellbeing team complete regular 'At Risk' meetings, to identify and monitor the health and wellbeing of students and, act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support

- each team meeting, all teams will identify any students who may require additional support and report to an assigned Wellbeing team member
- families working with allied health services or external services such as; the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Orange Door, ELMHS, NDIA, and counselling services - will be supported by the Wellbeing Team
- all students from P-6 will be assisted to revisit or develop an individual Ready to Learn Plan, following up targeted goals and support plans to enable a student to de-escalate and become ready to learn. Wellbeing will support or explicitly teach students in a smaller group setting.
- 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. Koorie students have a Koorie Individual Plan and are connected to our KESO and local Koorie community. Invite KESO to all SSGs. Create a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Koorie cultures and identities
- all students in Out of Home Care are 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 being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Wellbeing staff along with the AIP Wellbeing team will undertake mental health and wellbeing promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or school staff or families/caregivers
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma. All staff training by Foundation House and Berry Street Education Model.
- Our Wellbeing team will support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds by ensuring students and their families have what they need to transition to Dandenong West Primary School such as school bags, drink bottles, uniforms, lunches. Supports are put in place to support families financially through South East Community Links, Foundation House or AMES
- 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]*
- 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 personal learning plans

Individual (Tier 3)

- Teachers, Education Support staff, families/carers refer a 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 Orange Door, ELMHS, CGD, DFFH
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator
- Student Support Groups, see:
 - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supporgroups.aspx>
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/psdhandbook.aspx>
- Personal Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan for students who are not AT level. [Individual Education Plans](#)
- Program for Students with Disabilities are supported with an Education Support member, our Speech Pathologist and any allied health workers connected through NDIA [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services for students who are disengaged from their learning, struggling to concentrate or are

showing behaviours identified in Tier 3 [Behaviour - Students Behaviour Support Plans](#)

- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace, REACH for any students with mental health concerns [Mental health toolkit](#) [headspace](#)
- LookOut training for Mentor Teachers <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supporting-students-out-home-care/resources>
- Speech Pathologist and Speech Pathologist Monash University Students based at DWPS
- OT Therapists ACU University students based at DWPS
- The Wellbeing team will monitor new arrival students and families and seek support of Foundation House http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/VFST_Form_Referral_Schools_v04-interactive.pdf
- Refugee Program Monash Health referrals made for any families that need support
- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances. Wellbeing will communicate needs and strategies needed with team involved with student e.g. teacher, ES member, specialists, intervention teacher
- teacher will initiate meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up

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. Attendance officer to work alongside teacher and family.
 - 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
 - students with chronic attendance and referring to suitable services such as DET Attendance Office, Navigator, Orange Door, DFFH, Wyndemere Attendance Program
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/attendance/Pages/default.aspx> .

4. Identifying students in need of support

Dandenong West Primary School is committed to providing the necessary and holistic 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. Dandenong West 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 and family are enrolled
- attendance records are monitored, and 'Unexplained' attendance is followed up by the classroom teacher first and ongoing absences to the attendance team/officer. Meetings held with families/carers to support their children's attendance
- academic performance is tracked by all teachers and analysed in PLC teams to discuss next steps. If students are 12 months behind expected level, plans are put in place to target student needs

- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, learning or social behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, Wellbeing referrals and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- referrals from teachers/staff/caregivers
- referrals from paediatrician or child services (DFFH)

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, 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

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, Dandenong West 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 implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

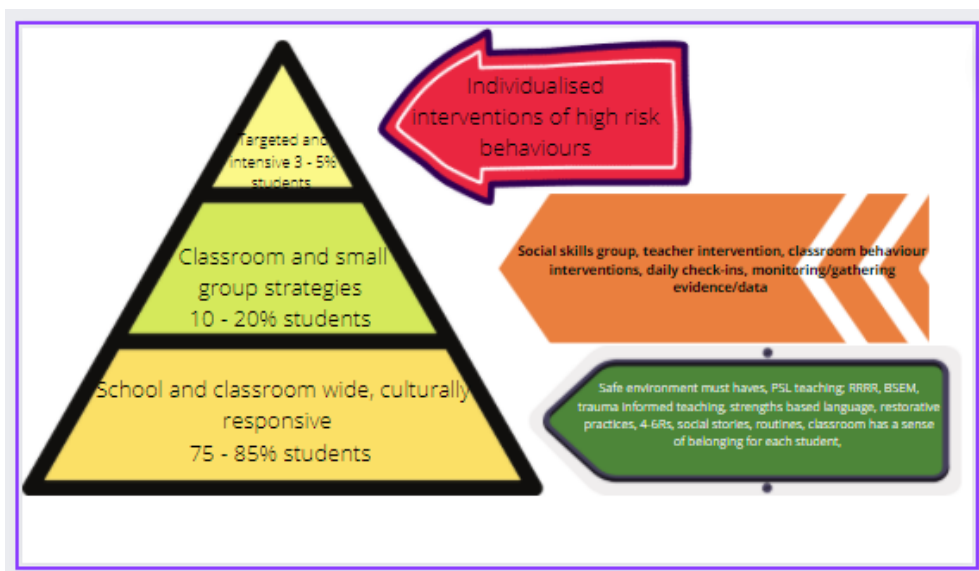
Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary

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
- referral to the year level PLC Leader/Wellbeing/Principalship
- restorative practices
- consequences
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Levels of Restorative Conferencing at Dandenong West Primary



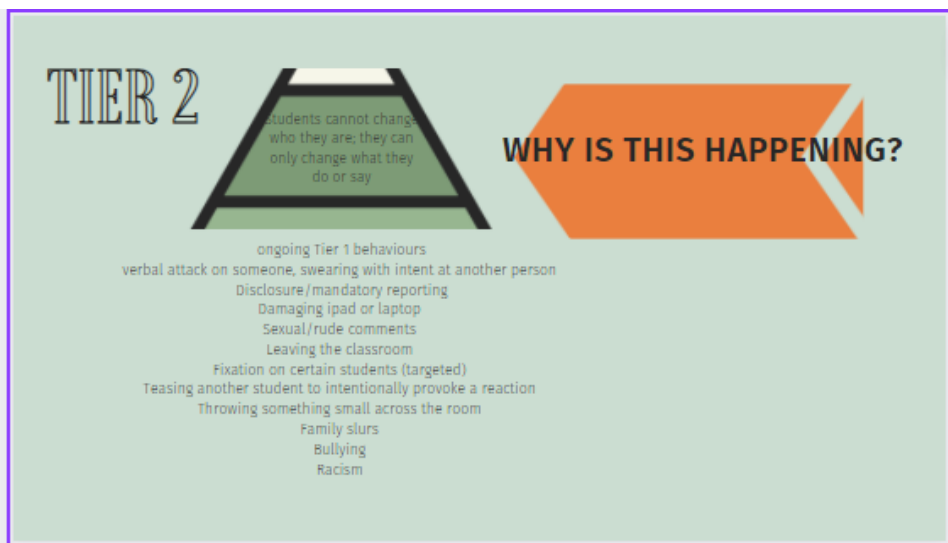
Tier 1:

- Is conducted in the classroom, playground and corridor
- All staff are expected to follow the 4Rs process:
 - *Reminder, Redirection, Respond & Relocate, Reflect & Restore
- Learning environment displays 'PSL Must haves' and can be used to redirect behaviour
- Can be conducted by a teacher or student
- Ends with an informal agreement between those affected



Tier 2:

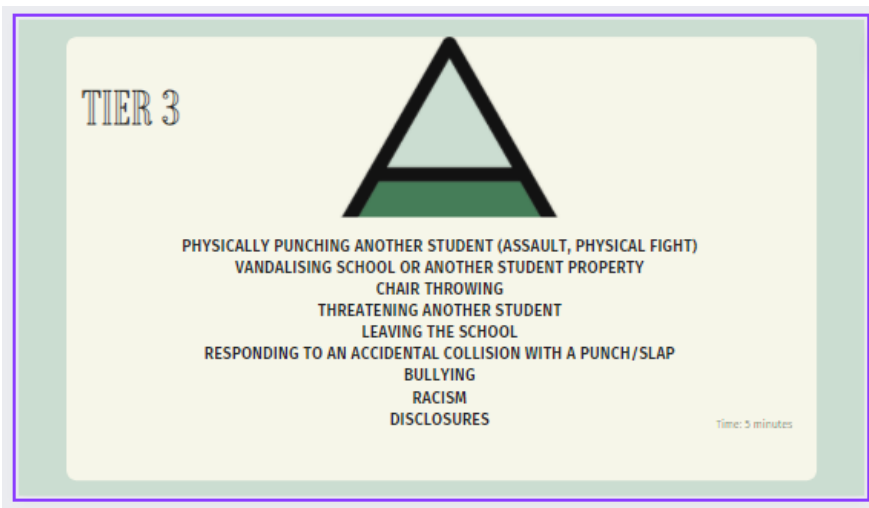
- Deals with moderately serious incidents
- Can be facilitated by class teacher, and/ or senior staff / Welbeing staff
- Follows the 5 restorative questions
- Everyone has an opportunity to explain how the incident affected them
- Written record is kept
- Resolution / agreement to restore the harm caused
- Repairing the harm – agreed actions are carried out
- Reflection process, if appropriate
- Parents to be contacted, particularly if there have been ongoing behaviour issues



Tier 3:

- Deals with 'At Risk' behaviours
- Is conducted by a trained member of senior staff or facilitator
- Involves everyone affected by the incident and may also involve others to provide support e.g. parents, school psychologist, teacher, etc.
- Follows the 5 restorative questions. May require a scripted framework for formal conferences dealing with very serious incidents
- Written record of conference, giving everyone an opportunity to explain how the incident affected them
- An agreed action plan or formal agreement is decided upon to repair harm and support behaviour change
- Formal agreement or action plan that is monitored by a senior staff member

Parents will be contacted by a member of senior staff and may be asked to attend a meeting or a formal conference



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 Dandenong West 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

Dandenong West 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 policy.
- 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.

Providing a range of programs and opportunities for parents to learn through our Community Hub.

Parents have the right to:

- know that their children are in a safe, happy learning environment where they are treated fairly with respect
- Expect a positive and supportive approach to their child's learning
- Expect communication and participation in their child's education and learning

Parents share a responsibility to:

- Build a positive relationship with members of the school community
- Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials
- Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress

Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students

8. Evaluation

Dandenong West 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

Dandenong West 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
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

NOTE: Policies page on website invites feedback on all policies.

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 & 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 & Approval.

Policy last reviewed	June 2022
Consultation	School council 22 June 2022
Approved by	Beverley Hansen <i>Principal</i>
Next scheduled review date	June 2024