

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2025-2027

Child Safe Standards

Children have the right to be safe and protected, including at school.

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafestandards>

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.

Kennington 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

1. School profile

Kennington Primary School is situated in a suburb of the regional city of Bendigo. The school, which opened in 1912, moved to its current site in 1996.

The school sits on a landscaped site of 12.1 hectares. The grounds are established with play spaces for students, including a stadium, an oval, a number of sealed multi-purpose courts and a large

undercover area. The school buildings are a mix of modern brick building on several levels. Spacious classrooms are supplemented by break out and withdrawal areas. A visual arts facility, music room and library are included within the school buildings.

The school population has remained stable at around 600 students. Classes are organised in year levels, with three or four classes in year level team. The school hosts the Bendigo Deaf facility. Deaf students are integrated into the mainstream classrooms with the support of facility staff.

All Grade 4, 5 and 6 students have a laptop, which is provided through a parent co-contribution model, and other grade levels have access to banks of iPads and laptops.

The current school staffing profile is comprised of 54 teachers including a Principal and two Assistant Principals and the equivalent of 30 ongoing/contract Educational Support Staff and additional casual ESS staff.

The school curriculum reflects the Victorian Curriculum framework, with specialist programs Physical Education, Performing and Visual arts. The school supports inclusion by offering Auslan as its Language Other Than English (LOTE).

1. School values, philosophy, and vision

Kennington 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 Personal Best, Respect and Resilience at every opportunity.

At Kennington Primary School, we strive for educational excellence, promote lifelong learning and prepare students for their role in the local and global community.

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

2. Engagement strategies

Kennington 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

- 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

- families have the opportunity to participate in decisions related to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child, e.g., through School Council, committee membership, surveys etc
- the school engages and openly communicates with families and the school community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible
- families and the school community have the opportunity to participate in the development and review of child safety and wellbeing policies and practices e.g. through School Council, committee membership, surveys etc
- families, carers, and the community are informed about the operations and governance of the school related to child safety and wellbeing
- 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 Kennington Primary School use a Kennington Primary School Instructional Model 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 Kennington 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 DET
- 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 School Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- students have the opportunity to participate in excursions and incursions from Grades prep-6, and in the camps program from Grades 2-6.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the Buddies program, School Production, Theme days e.g. Multi-Cultural, Footy & Book Week Days, Kids' Club, sports events e.g. Athletics days, Instrumental Music Program.
- we engage in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Values education
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviours e.g. grade 6 leadership Course and Program
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, recess, and lunchtime activities)

Targeted

- each year group has a SWPBS leader who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer, have a Koorie Education Plan and semesterly SSGs
- all students in Out of Home Care have an Individual Learning Plan, be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment and have termly Student Support Group Meetings
- all students with English as an Additional Language will be supported by the EAL teacher and Multi-Cultural education Aide
- a student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
- staff, students, volunteers, and the school community are equipped to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students.
- measures are in place to ensure racism is identified, confronted, and not tolerated, and any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
- active support for the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and students and their families.
- support for staff and volunteers to understand the diverse circumstance of children and students, and provide support and respond to vulnerable children and students
- ensure students, staff, volunteers, and the school community have access to information, support and complaints processes that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand
- pay particular attention to the needs of students with disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students who are unable to live at home, international students, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students
- 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](#)
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Kennington Primary School will implement recruitment practices for staff and contractors engaged in child connected work, that ensure:

- all job advertisements have a statement setting out the job's requirements, duties, responsibilities and essential or relevant qualifications, experience, and attributes in relation to child safety and wellbeing
- all applicants for jobs are informed about the child safety practices, including the Code of Conduct
- Working with Children clearances are sighted, verified and recorded, where required under the Worker Screening Act 2020 or any equivalent background check, for example VIT registration
- Department of Education and Training recruitment policies and practices are followed and appropriate records kept
- the school council follows Department of Education and Training recruitment policies and practices and appropriate records kept in respect of school council employees
- that practices for the ongoing supervision and people management of staff and volunteers to ensure child safety and wellbeing is a focus and are reviewed

Where the person will be engaged in child-related work, KPS will collect and record proof of identify, essential or relevant qualifications, history of work involving children and references addressing suitability for the job and working with children.

Kennington Primary School will implement engagement practices for volunteers engaged in child connected work, including:

- sight, verify and record Working with Children clearances where required under the Worker Screening Act 2020 or any equivalent background check
- consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer's role and, if reasonable and appropriate, collect and record proof of identify, essential or relevant qualifications, history of work involving children and references addressing suitability for the job and working with children
- make volunteers aware of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct
- ensure all newly appointed school staff, school council members, and volunteers engaged in child-connected work receive an induction regarding child safety and wellbeing appropriate to their roles, including information about the Child Safety Code of Conduct the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the procedures for managing child abuse complaints and concerns.
- ensure school staff, school council members and volunteers engaged in child-connected work are aware of their responsibilities to children and students, information sharing, reporting obligations and record-keeping obligations.

Individual

- Student Support Groups meetings (termly) for students in Out of Home Care and supported through Program for Students with Disabilities
- Student Support Groups meetings (semesterly) for students with ASD, severe language deficits, chronic absenteeism and significant medical conditions, and Koorie students.
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plans for identified students
- Disability Inclusion funding for identified students
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to Family Services Worker, ChildFirst, Headspace, Orange Door
- Navigator (supports disengaged young people to return to education and learning).
- Lookout (support services for Out of Home Care students)

Kennington Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These 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 the Orange Door
- Re-engagement programs such as Navigator and TeachR (education support provided by Department of Education within schools)

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

3. Identifying students in need of support

Kennington Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Leadership team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Kennington 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
- information from external agencies

4. 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 their class teacher, a trusted teacher, or a member of the school leadership team.

5. 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 Kennington Primary School's anti-Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Kennington 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 Grade Level Coordinator
- referral to the Assistant Principal/Principal
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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 Kennington Primary school is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited schoolboy law and will not be used at our school.

6. Engaging with families

Kennington 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 the Sentral Portal
- frequently communicating with parents and carers, predominantly through Sentral, Webex, email and in person
- 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 Remote and Flexible Learning, 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.

7. Evaluation

Kennington 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
- sentral data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related policies;

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safe Standards

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was ratified by School Council in May 2025 and will be reviewed in May 2027.