

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT (Feb 2021)

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.

Edithvale 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.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School Profile

Edithvale Primary School is situated in the City of Kingston, 26 kilometres from the CBD. It is well positioned between Port Phillip Bay and Edithvale Wetlands giving our school community a wonderful opportunity to develop a sound and responsive environmental awareness. The school has a rich history and well established links with the local kindergartens, primary schools, secondary colleges and

community support agencies. We are actively involved with a variety of local organisations in the wider community.

Extra curricula programs include camps, swimming, performing arts, interschool sports, instrumental music, choir, excursions and special events.

Our educational priority has been to enhance and promote quality teaching and learning practices with a strong commitment to expert professional development and Performance & Development Culture. The classroom and learning environments are student-focused and we encourage our students to have agency in their learning and parents to have a voice. We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

We provide a supportive, engaging, active, and enjoyable environment that encourages all students to achieve their personal best. We prepare our students for lifelong learning in a climate that embraces fairness, trust and mutual respect. We are committed to working closely with all families and the wider community to provide opportunities for every child to reach their full potential.

Our vision is to foster a love of learning in our school community. We work together to know our students and understand their learning needs. Our aim is to ensure that learning is fun, active and meaningful in an environment where individuality, creativity and curiosity are valued.

We endeavour to prepare our students for tomorrow's world, developing their skills and knowledge, enabling them to live and work in a global community as effective, responsible and caring citizens.

We strive to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

In order to achieve success in realising our purpose we have established a core set of values. At Edithvale Primary School the community is committed to working together to ensure a learning environment where the following qualities are valued and expected:

Values

At Edithvale Primary School the community is committed to working together to ensure a learning environment where the following qualities are valued and developed:

We are Edithvale Primary and we are Respectful, Kind and Determined.

We believe these to be the cornerstones of a strong culture of learning and development.

Respect includes -

- displaying good manners to all members of our community
- caring for ourselves and others
- caring for our shared environment
- displaying understanding for the diversity in our community/world.

Kindness includes -

- having thoughtful and positive interactions with all students, staff and community members
- demonstrating empathy toward others
- appreciating and understanding diversity

Determination includes -

- working hard each day and to the best of your ability
- displaying personal and academic grit to do your best, always.
- displaying a growth mindset: positive actions, behaviours, words and choices

We encourage each of our students to recognise their unique significance to our school community and support and guide them as they explore their interests and abilities.

We respect ourselves, our school and each another, and understand that our attitudes and behaviours have an impact on the people around us.

We model and demonstrate kindness, and take every opportunity to help others that may be in need.

We strive for excellence, which means trying our hardest and doing our best.

3. Engagement strategies

Edithvale 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*
- *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 Edithvale Primary School use an [NAME] instructional framework 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 Edithvale 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 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 Voice Team and other forums including year group meetings.*

Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the 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 school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
 - *Safe Schools*
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, extra curricula activities at recess and lunchtimes)*
- *buddy programs, peers support programs*

Targeted

As a DET education provider Edithvale Primary School makes ‘reasonable adjustments’ to accommodate all students with a disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student’s learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, we take into account information about

- the nature of the student’s disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information is provided by parents or carers, students, family members or associates of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

We ensure that the student’s family has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the school. We also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

We may also consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, to ourselves, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student’s participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student’s participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the school if the student participates.

N.B. The Disability Discrimination Act and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

Individual

Edithvale Primary School works very closely with individual students and their families, enlisting the expertise of our Student Support Services team and educational and community agencies such as Kids In Mind, Kids Like Us, Newton Psychology, D.H.S., Child First and Family Life when needed. Our staff are all trained in Restorative Practices and Mandatory Reporting.

Individual Education Plans for 'at risk' students are developed and monitored by classroom teachers.

Student Support Group meetings, where achievements and future goals are discussed at length, are held regularly.

Edithvale 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 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 ChildFirst*
 - *Re-engagement programs such as Navigator*

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.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Edithvale 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Edithvale 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*

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 Child Safety Code of Conduct highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

All students have a right to:

- Take part in learning programs that meet their individual needs.
- Feel secure and to be safe in a caring and supportive environment.
- Work and play without interference in an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation.
- Receive respect, kindness and courtesy and to be treated with fairness.
- Have learning continued without disruption in a supportive environment.
- Be valued for their individuality including; race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity.
- Expect the school rules are fair, consistently implemented and respect the rights of all involved.
- To be safe in every aspect of daily life at school, including Out Of School Hours Programs, camps and excursions.

All students have a responsibility to:

- Care and value themselves, others, teachers and the school community.
- Be safety conscious in relation to themselves and others.
- Treat others with respect and good manners.
- Keep the guidelines of good behaviour, modelling and supporting school rules.
- Develop a sense of accountability for their own actions.
- Work to achieve their personal best whilst allowing others to do the same.
- Allow for others to learn and to respect the rights of others.
- Explore their full potential in their learning.

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.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Edithvale Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

The Principal and school leaders of Edithvale Primary School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments.

School leadership and staff promote a culture of respect, fairness and equality, and foster respectful relationships. The school environment is inclusive and empowering, valuing the positive contributions of students and creating a sense of belonging and connectedness that are conducive to positive behaviors and effective engagement in learning. There are multiple opportunities for students to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making.

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including

- understanding the student's background and needs
- ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- scaffolding the student's learning program.

Edithvale Primary School provides a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and encourages care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected attributes (characteristics) including race, religion, disability, sex, age, gender identity and sexual orientation.

This Statement of Values sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

- Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school

When a student acts in breach of the rights and responsibilities of our students and staff, Edithvale 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- which is including, but limited to (Restorative White Forms, phone calls, emails.)

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*
- *recess and/or lunchtime detentions*
- *behaviour reviews*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

Broader support strategies will include

- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- involving the student wellbeing coordinator and external support agencies when indicated
- mentoring and/or counselling
- convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- developing individualised learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving student support services by referring students who may appear to be educationally at risk

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

7. Engaging with families

Edithvale 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.

8. Evaluation

Edithvale 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
- CASES21
- SOCS (Student Online cases system)



This policy was last updated on February 11, 2021 and is scheduled for review in 2023 (2 yearly). This policy will also be updated if significant changes are made that require a revision of this policy