

# St Albans East Primary School

## Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact 9366 2071 or [st.albans.east.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:st.albans.east.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.

St Albans east 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

St Albans East Primary School is located in St Albans within the City of Brimbank and is approximately 22 kilometers from the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was founded in 1956. The school is also home to the St Albans East Deaf Facility which has served the South Western Metropolitan Region since 2001.

The school grounds comprise of a main Administration Building, Learning Centres, Wellbeing Centre, Deaf Facility, Hall, Art Room and STEM Room. The school features flexible, open plan learning spaces to promote meaningful collaboration between students and teachers. The grounds include a synthetic oval, basketball courts, open grassed spaces and 3 playgrounds.

Our school is culturally diverse with a Student Family Occupation (SFO) density is 0.74.

Of our 2022 student population:

- 69% of students come from a language background other than English
- 263 students speak a language other than English at home
- 145 students receive the Learning for Life Scholarship in partnership with The Smith Family
- 126 families receive the Camps, Sports & Excursion Funding (CSEF)
- 30 languages represented with 39% of our student population speaking Vietnamese at home.

The staffing profile of St Albans East Primary School includes a Principal and 2 Assistant Principals, 1 leading teacher, 4 Learning Specialists and 30.5 (full time equivalent) staff comprising of Classroom Teachers, Response to Intervention staff and Teachers of the Deaf. There are 11.4 (full time equivalent) Education Support Staff comprising of Office Administration, classroom Education Support Staff, Auslan Interpreters, Student Wellbeing Worker, Multicultural Aides and Speech Pathologists.

The school's curriculum framework incorporates the eight learning areas required by the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 aligned with the Victorian Curriculum. It has a strong emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy and aims to address the needs of a large majority of students from non English speaking homes through its English as an Additional Language (EAL) Program. Through our Inquiry and Integrated based learning program, the school seeks to build students' questioning, thinking and research skills and students use a range of media to present their findings. Specialist programs include STEM, Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Physical Education. The school's Language Other Than English is Auslan.

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

St Albans East 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 Respect, Responsibility, Cooperation and Learning at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is: "We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and engaging learning environment that nurtures personal and academic excellence as community minded life long

learners.”

Our school’s vision and values are available online at: <https://www.saepe.vic.edu.au/page/172/Our-Vision>

### **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

St Albans East 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.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (small group & cohort specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

#### Universal - Whole School Strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion:

- implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework where we define, teach and reinforce positive behaviours for all students. This approach focuses on building a safe and positive environment in which all students can learn through the establishment of processes, procedures and programs such as:
  - Matrix of Expected Behaviour, incorporating our school values
  - Behaviour Management Procedure
  - Expect Respect (Bully Prevention)
  - Acknowledgement System - ‘SAEPS Star Cards’
  - Respectful Relationships using the Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships learning materials
  - The Zones of Regulation
- 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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 St Albans East Primary School use The SAEPS 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 St Albans East 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 and School Philosophy 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 at school assemblies with Student Achievement Awards
- 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 Junior School Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Education Support Staff and Leadership Team whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for inclusion and cross—age connections amongst students through our House Spirit program, Clubs, lunchtime games and activities
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Worker 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
- buddy programs for students in Prep and new students to our school
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

#### Targeted

- each year group has a Learning Specialist responsible for their cohort, who with their team monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- 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 – refer to our Action Plan for Aboriginal Learning and Wellbeing Policy for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our classroom programs and Response to Intervention, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included through Western English Language School
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through Individual Learning Plans and Student Support Group meetings
- 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](#)
- 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
- 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 Individual Learning Plans
- wellbeing staff support students’ social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff and conduct small group targeted intervention focusing on social & emotional learning skills (e.g. Feeling is Thinking program, Wise Girls etc.)
- staff apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma (e.g. Berry Street Education Model)

- 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](#)
- Our Allied Health Team includes Speech Pathologists who assess and develop programs for students to better access their language and communication needs. Support and advice is provided to teaching staff to improve practice and support the speech and language needs of students within their classrooms based on recommendations from the Allied Health Team
- Response to Intervention is implemented school wide to support students identified as at risk or needing extension in their learning
- Teachers of the Deaf and Auslan Interpreters support our Hard of Hearing and Deaf Students within mainstream classrooms as well as small group intervention in the Deaf Facility.

### Individual

St Albans East Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement by:

- 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 (e.g. Student Wellbeing Worker, Speech Pathologists for individual therapy)
  - Student Support Services including Visiting Teachers
  - Appropriate external support such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or ChildFirst.

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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - funded under the Program for Students with Disabilities
  - in Out of Home Care
  - Koorie
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

## **4. Identifying students in need of support**

St Albans East 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. St Albans East 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.

## **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 are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Matrix of Expected Behaviours.

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, St Albans East Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Any decisions made in relation to addressing challenging behaviours should be clearly documented and discussed with the student's parent or guardian. The disciplinary measures that may be implemented for incidents of challenging behaviour will depend on the nature and severity of the incident.

St Albans East Primary School is committed to providing a safe, orderly and secure learning environment. Successful interventions are underpinned by strong staff-student relationships, as they require an understanding of the underlying factors influencing behaviour and the immediate triggers for its occurrence. The teacher or appropriate staff member should seek to identify the reasons and triggers for that child's behaviour and address these where possible to reduce the likelihood of future problems.

We have an agreed procedure for addressing student behaviour that disrupts the learning environment or is a risk to the safety of St Albans East Primary students, staff or community members. Our procedures are based on the belief that, given the opportunity, students can correct classroom misbehaviours when they are alerted to teacher concerns.

St Albans East Primary Schools Behaviour Management Procedure can be accessed on our school's website [SWPBS at SAEPS](#) and sets out the sequence of actions to be taken in the case of 'Major Behaviours' and 'Minor Behaviours'. 'Major Behaviours' are those which pose an immediate threat to the safe, orderly and secure environment and must be addressed immediately; all other behaviours are deemed 'Minor Behaviours'.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as 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 Leadership Team
- restorative practices
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion.

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 St Albans East 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**

St Albans East 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
- access to online portals including SeeSaw Families and Compass.

## **8. Evaluation**

St Albans East 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.

St Albans East 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 as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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 AND 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](#)
- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

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 AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	19/06/2022
Consultation	Accessible on the school website
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	19/06/2024

