



**BE A LEARNER
BE RESPECTFUL
BE RESILIENT**

STUDENT WELLBEING, INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Leongatha 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.

We involve students when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and acceptance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally
- ensure that children who are vulnerable are safe and can participate

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

Leongatha Primary School (LPS) is a large primary school that has serviced its community for 130 years. Leongatha is a service town for the rural industries of South Gippsland, especially the dairy industry. LPS is a major stakeholder in the Leongatha Education Precinct that was established following the co-location of the Secondary College, Specialist School, TAFE and Primary School onto a single site in 2012.

Our shared vision is to foster kindness, curiosity, confidence and inclusion. Our students are lifelong learners who set high expectations, accept challenges and contribute to a global community and to uphold our Values - Be a Learner, Be Respectful and Be Resilient. Leongatha Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

By providing the best possible teaching and learning culture we will continue to enhance students' achievements, develop their skills and increase their confidence. We are passionate about creating a culture where students, teachers and leaders collaborate and share a common language, beliefs, values and expectations. A structured wellbeing program is provided across all levels of the school and is supported by our commitment to Respectful Rights and Relationships which our school is a lead school partner in for the district. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We see ourselves as partners in the creation of healthy learning environments and excellent educational and wellbeing outcomes.

In 2023, the school timetable facilitated five specialist programs. All students participated in weekly Physical Education, Chinese, Visual Arts and Performing Arts and STEM classes.

Our school has three Learning Specialists with two Numeracy Specialists and a PLC Link School Leader. We also have an Inclusion Leader who is released for one day a week to support inclusive practices. In the junior area we have implemented the Sounds Write literacy program with all of our junior staff being trained in this program. Our senior school has continued with the Fountas and Pinnell reading program. We have two part time welfare people at our school one working in the junior area and the other in the senior area. We are very proud of our two school dogs who provided wonderful comfort and support to our students. These trained dogs have become an invaluable part of our staff as they have been regularly used to support students who have been suffering with stress and anxiety. We have three staff working in the Tutoring Program where students are working in small groups at their reading level with trained tutors.

Our school is a Lead school for the region in Respectful Relationships and a Link school for the region in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) where other schools visit our school to observe and learn from our teachers about how to run and organise a quality PLC. We are very proud of our school and the school data indicates that the students, staff and parents are very happy with it too.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Leongatha 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, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to foster kindness, curiosity, confidence and inclusion. Our students are lifelong learners who set high expectations, accept challenges and contribute to a global community

3. Engagement strategies

Leongatha 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

- An established Engagement Team with a member from every grade level team.
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that aligns with our vision to foster kindness, curiosity, confidence and inclusion.
- 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 Leongatha Primary School use a shared Literacy & Numeracy instructional model to ensure explicit and common practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- Teachers at Leongatha 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 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 Representative Council 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 Better Buddies support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Chaplain, teachers, 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
 - Cyber Safety program
 - Safe Schools

- Hands on Learning
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

Targeted

- each grade level team has a collective responsibility for monitoring the health and wellbeing of students in their year level.
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer.
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment.
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma.
- 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 measures.
- We support learning and well-being outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds by connecting them to our Wellbeing Team staff and Inclusion Leader.

Individual

Leongatha Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- Refer individual students to Wellbeing team that includes School Chaplain and Wellbeing officer and Inclusion Leader.
- 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 Education Plan (IEP) and/or a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)
- considering applying any adjustments outlined in the NCCD
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as The Orange Door, council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services.

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 a plan to improve attendance in collaboration with the student and their family
- Introduce family to the Leongatha Primary School Attendance policy.
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
 - with a disability or diverse needs
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Leongatha Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Leongatha 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, 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

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 Leongatha Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Leongatha 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 considers, explores and 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
- restorative practices
- removal from the yard
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension in-school and external.
- 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 Team of Leongatha Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

Leongatha 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 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

Leongatha 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 Attitudes to School Survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Leongatha 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
- 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

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	April 2023
Consultation	Engagement Team and School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2025