Billanook Primary School
STUDENT WELLBEING 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.

Billanook 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
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POLICY

1. School profile

Billanook Primary school is situated at the foot of Mt Dandenong, providing a beautiful environment for learning and play. The Billanook Primary School community has a consistent and positive approach to behaviour and uses Restorative Practices, along with a clear focus on our school Values of Kindness, Grit, Aspiration and Respect to foster a school climate where personal responsibility and self-discipline are developed. Our Behaviour Response Model focuses on positive response and early intervention.

In 2026 435 students were enrolled in our school, 216 female and 219 male. Our overall socio-economic profile places us in the medium range. Billanook PS has 40 equivalent full time staff including 3 Principal class, 45 full and part time teaching staff including Education Support and

Administration staff. We currently don't have any staff who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. We have 6 male and 31 female staff members.

At Billanook we aim to provide a safe, nurturing, dynamic learning community that caters for the uniqueness of each student. We provide an environment and curriculum that challenges students to achieve to their highest potential and that develops the knowledge, skills and resilience to be successful global citizens. We use evidence based practices underpinned by a rigorous planning, mentoring and coaching model to ensure that all children receive an education at their point of need. Learning takes place in a climate that values learning excellence, a sense of community, creativity and enjoyment of learning.

Learning is purposeful, authentic and steeped in research and evidence. We have a growing capacity to include student voice and agency within our planning.

The teaching staff utilise our whole school approaches underpinned by our developing and ever evolving instructional models. We provide a comprehensive and sequential curriculum, our priority learning areas include Literacy, Numeracy, Humanities and Science with a focus on explicit instruction. Our teachers provide classroom based intervention and extension as part of our differentiated learning approach. Students are supported through enrichment and extension programs to cater directly to their point of need.

Classroom programs are enhanced and supported by specialist teachers in Visual and Performing Arts, AUSLAN and Physical Education. 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

School Values

Billanook Primary School's vision is underpinned by the values of:

1. *Aspiration – Strive for your personal best in everything you do*
2. *Respect – Show courtesy to ourselves, others and our environment*
3. *Kindness – Always be friendly, courteous and considerate of others*
4. *Grit – Keep working towards your goals, even when they are challenging*

School Philosophy

Our philosophy is to educate the 'whole child' at Billanook Primary School. We strive for our students to become motivated and independent learners through the provision of a wide range of learning choices. We believe that the link between engagement, wellbeing and learning is paramount. We promote student agency, resilience, perseverance and independence to capably prepare our students for an ever changing world.

School Vision

Empowering students to work in partnership with our community to acquire and demonstrate the fundamental skills needed to optimise their holistic well-being through a culture of excellence.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

At Billanook Primary School, we are aware of the important reciprocal and interconnected relationship between wellbeing and learning. Student wellbeing and strengthening community wellbeing is a whole-school priority at Billanook Primary school and is at the forefront of all that we do.

Our responsive classroom approach to managing the engagement and wellbeing of students is targeted. The overarching goal is to keep the focus on learning, while maintaining a classroom that's physically and emotionally safe for all.

At Billanook Primary we;

- maintain children's dignity
- develop children's self-control and self-regulation skills
- help children recognise and fix any harm caused by their mistakes
- demonstrate that rules help make the classroom a safe place where all can learn

Billanook 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 (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 and development
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning through our Parent Helpers program
- analysing and being responsive to a range of formal and informal school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey (AtoSS), parent survey data, student management data, student opinion surveys and school level assessment data
- teachers at Billanook Primary School use our Billanook Instructional Model to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction is used to ensure that evidenced-based teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Billanook Primary School follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling e.g. *Settle In Program*
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and more formally through Assemblies, Values and Academic awards and Sheffie Awards
- leadership monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Students are encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school production, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- all families are welcome to access our Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Counsellor, Year Level 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 parents 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 Project
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address specific issues, needs or behaviours (i.e. social skills groups)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- 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 Year Level Leader who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year through standing agenda items in team meetings.
- Koori 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.
- KESO officers work with our classroom teachers to support the implementation of Individual Education Plans for our Koorie students.
- culturally and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school with targeted lessons focussing on celebrating belonging and difference.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQA+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQA+ 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 Education 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 education plans
- wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma supported by Berry Street resources
- 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

Individual

Billanook 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 Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plans as needed
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up to improve the dynamics of the classroom
- referring the student to:
    - school-based wellbeing supports (Wellbeing coordinator, School Counsellor)
    - 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

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, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student/family
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koori Education Support Officers as needed
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
    - with a disability (funded)
    - requiring an Individual Education Plan due to individual circumstance
    - in Out of Home Care
    - of a Koori background
    - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Please refer to the department's Policy and Advisory Library, and other resources below, for more information:

- *Student Support Groups*
- *Individual Education Plans*
- *Behaviour - Students*
- *Behaviour Support Plans*
- *Student Support Services*
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- *Mental health toolkit*
- *Headspace*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Billanook Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team (including Wellbeing

Coordinator, Assistant Principal, Principal and Chaplain) play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing.

Billanook 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 data
- academic outcomes
- observations by any and all school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- Compass Chronicle (Wellbeing and Behavioural) and suspension data
- engagement with families
- family referrals
- self-referrals

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:

- Calm and settled classrooms
- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy in the playground and classroom
- 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 actively in their education
- respect the right of others to learn
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- Display behaviours in line with our school Values

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 our Values approach. Billanook has developed a detailed and staged response to managing student behaviour within our 'Billanook Primary School Behaviour Response Model'.

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. Specific incidents of 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, Billanook Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. In line with our response model, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

As part of our Behaviour Response Model' our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures. 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 and a supported opportunity to get back on track*
- *teacher controlled consequences that are reasonable and proportionate to the misbehaviour*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *restorative practices*
- *behaviour support and intervention meetings*

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

- Suspensions Policy
- Expulsions Policy
- Restraint and 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.

The Principal of Billanook 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

Billanook 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:

- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- using Compass as a communication tool to keep our parents informed

- regularly engaging in positive communication between teachers and parent/carers through email, phone calls and incidental conversations
- communicating and celebrating our school through the use of official social media profiles including Facebook and Instagram.
- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities, including Classroom Helpers, School Council and Parents Association
- inviting families into our school to celebrate special events and using technology (such as WebEx) to live stream events as appropriate
- involving families in school decision making
- working with our local businesses to create pathways
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families when needed
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.
- providing 3 formal opportunities for teachers and parents to celebrate achievements and set goals

8. Evaluation

Billanook 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 (atoss and school based data)
- chronicle entry data from Compass (wellbeing, behaviour, academic, yard duty incidents)
- school reports
- parent survey
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Billanook Primary School will also regularly liaise with parents and teachers 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 policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- Attendance
- Behaviour - Students
- Child Safe Standards
- Expulsions
- Koorie Education
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support
- Restraint and Seclusion
- Student Engagement
- Students with Disability
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Suspensions

The following school policies and approaches are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- BPS Behaviour Response Model
- Complaints policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2026
Consultation	School Community – Student Groups – Teacher Groups – July 2026 School Council – September 2026?
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2028