



ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
No. 2608

# ASCOT VALE 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 the school office / admin team.

### 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.

Ascot Vale 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.

### Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy, and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

## Policy

### 1. School profile

Ascot Vale Primary School, established in 1885, is located 6km north-west from the Melbourne CBD and is situated within the South-Western Region of the Department of Education & Training as one of 24 schools within the Moonee Valley Network of schools.

The current multi-age structure commenced in 1984 with support from the school community and continues to be a strong feature of the way we learn together. Two or three classes combine to make a unit of children from several year levels or age groups. Teachers are assigned to a class of children of similar year levels and combine with a different age group where possible to form a multi-age unit of learners. The multi-age combinations across the school in 2022 included: Unit 1: P/1/2, Unit 2: 3/4 & 5/6, Unit 3: P/1 /2, Unit 4: 3 / 4 & 5/6, Unit 5: P/1/2, Unit 6: 3/4 & 5/6. AVPS has 20.82 EFT school staff members including: 2 Principal Class Officers, 15.15 Teaching Staff and 3.67 Education Support Staff.

As of September 2022, we have 250 students enrolled from Year Prep to 6. Most students live locally (within 2km of the school) and almost 80% of students walk or ride their bike to school. Ascot Vale Primary School has developed close partnerships with community organisations such as the Flemington Farmers Market, Kelly Sports and Dance Theatre, and enjoys strong support from our local community.

56% of students' parents were born in Australia, 6% were born in the UK and 5% were born in India. 7% of families at Ascot Vale PS have a language background other than English (LOTE), with the largest LOTE groups being Arabic, Oromo, Somali and Hindi. Other languages spoken at home by AVPS students include Vietnamese, Tigrinya, Mongolian, Telugu, Mandarin, Shona, Japanese, Albanian, Amharic, Russian, Tagalog, Hebrew, Bengali and Guarati. 2.42% of students are from refugee background and .81% of students have an indigenous background. We are very proud of our diverse and inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging multi-age learning environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

### 2. School values, philosophy, and vision

All Ascot Vale Primary School students are empowered to learn and achieve, to experience high quality teaching practice for learning in a multi-age classroom and unique learning

community. This will equip them with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for lifelong learning and to shape the world around them.

Our AVPS school values guide community behaviours and actions. These are: Gratitude, Respect, Excellence, Empathy & Responsibility

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

Ascot Vale 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.

Ascot Vale Primary School implements The Resilience Project to deliver an evidence-based, positive mental health program to build resilient and happy students. This program focuses on Emotional Literacy, Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness, (GEM).

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 multi-age 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 Ascot Vale Primary School use the Gradual Release of Responsibility 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 Ascot Vale 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 via communication to parents

- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort, and individual level
- students can contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including class meetings and Student Voice Team. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for multi—age connections amongst students through, athletics, music programs and regular multi-age and buddy program
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - The Resilience Project
  - Zones of Regulation
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, recess, and lunchtime activities)
- 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

- all staff are responsible for their cohort and monitor the health and wellbeing of their students, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- 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 [Child Safe Standard 1 Culturally Safe Environment](#) for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our classroom programs, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through partnerships with the Western English Language School
- [Life Education](#) programs are provided by a preventative health organisation biannually to empower children to make safe and healthy choices.
- [Interrelate](#) programs are held annually to help teach Year 3/ 4 and 5/6 children safety regarding topics of sex, alcohol, and drug abuse.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background by advocating to ensure support resources are provided to families in need
- 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 Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be 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

- 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

### Individual

#### Student Support Groups (SSG)

An SSG is a partnership between schools, parents/carers, the student, and relevant agencies. The group works together to plan and support the educational, health, social, cultural, and emotional wellbeing of students with diverse learning needs to:

- ensure that those with the most knowledge of, and responsibility for the student, work together to establish shared goals for the student's education
- plan reasonable adjustments for the student to access the curriculum and participate in their education
- provide educational planning that is ongoing throughout the student's school life
- monitor the progress of the student

#### Behaviour - Students

Ascot Vale PS promotes positive behaviour, prevention and early intervention strategies, a tiered response approach for student behaviour and wellbeing and professional learning opportunities for staff.

#### Student Support Services

Student Support Services (SSS) teams are comprised of professionals including:

- psychologists
- speech pathologists
- social workers

They support schools in assisting children and young people facing barriers to learning to achieve their educational and developmental potential.

SSS staff work as part of an integrated health and wellbeing team within each area, focusing on providing:

- workforce capability building for school staff
- group based and individual support
- the provision of specialised services.

#### Program for Students with Disabilities

The Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) is one of the supports available to help Ascot Vale PS meet the needs of eligible students with disability and high needs.

#### Mental health toolkit

The Mental Health Toolkit provides expert guidance and resources on mental health promotion and support, aimed at schools and school communities, health and wellbeing workforces and mental health practitioners. It draws from existing Department resources, guidance, programs, and leverages expert external advice on promoting and supporting mental health in schools.

### [LOOKOUT](#)

LOOKOUT Education Support Centres are designed to boost the capability of early childhood services, schools, carers, child protection practitioners and out-of-home care services to improve educational outcomes for children and young people living in out-of-home care.

Ascot Vale PS 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 Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan - [Individual Education Plans](#), [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- 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
- 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:
  - 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**

Ascot Vale 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. Ascot Vale 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

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](#)

#### **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 reflect 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, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Expectations & Managing Behaviour document.

Violence, bullying behaviour, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with Ascot Vale Primary School's [Expectations & Managing Behaviour](#) document and our [Bullying Prevention Policy](#).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Ascot Vale 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 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 managed consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Principal or Assistant Principal
- restorative practices
- detentions
- 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 Ascot Vale Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

## **7. Engaging with families**

Ascot Vale 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 [Communication 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**

Ascot Vale 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
- SOCS

- The Resilient Youth Survey

Ascot Vale 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 <https://avps.vic.edu.au/policies--standards.html>
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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 our school's policies including 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](#)
- The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:
  - [Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy](#)
  - [AVPS Child Safe Standards](#)
  - [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
  - [Expectations and Managing Behaviour](#)
  - [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)
  - [Statement of Values and School Philosophy.](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August - November 2022
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Wellbeing (Staff) Team - 29/08/2022</li><li>• Staff PLT Meetings - 03/10/2022</li><li>• Student Voice Team - November 2022</li><li>• Parent Feedback Form - November 2022</li><li>• Policy Sub Committee -10/10/2022 &amp; 14/11/2022</li><li>• School Council - 28/11/2022</li></ul>
Approved by	Principal - November 24, 2022
Next scheduled review date	Term 3, 2024