STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this document, please contact the school via email at carlton.gardens.ps@education.vic.gov.au or call 9663 6502 for support.

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.

Carlton Gardens 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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POLICY

School Profile

Carlton Gardens Primary School is a government primary school located in the heart of Melbourne, providing education for students from Prep to Year 6 in a diverse, inclusive and welcoming community. Our students come from a wide range of cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds, and we are committed to ensuring every child feels safe, respected, valued and supported to thrive. Guided by our values of Respect, Resilience, Inclusivity and Curiosity, we foster a positive school culture through strong relationships with families and a whole-school approach to wellbeing, inclusion and engagement. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to meeting the Victorian Child Safe Standards by embedding child safety and wellbeing into our leadership, policies and everyday practice, while empowering students to have a voice, understand their rights and participate in decisions that affect them.

School Values, Philosophy and Vision

At Carlton Gardens Primary School, our mission is to empower all students with the knowledge, skills and mindset to become lifelong learners who are engaged and respectful members of society. Our vision is to create a supportive and challenging learning environment that fosters a love of learning, where every student is encouraged to achieve at high levels while celebrating the rich diversity of our school community. Our core values of **Respect, Resilience, Inclusivity and Curiosity** guide everything we do, shaping a positive, safe and inclusive culture where every child is known, valued and supported to thrive. Our Statement of Values is available on our website.

Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Carlton Gardens 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:

<u>Universal</u>

- Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 to inform high-quality classroom instruction for all students through its framing of the Elements of Learning and Elements of Teaching.
- School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) to explicitly teach, acknowledge and reinforce positive behaviours aligned with our school values of Respect, Resilience, Inclusivity and Curiosity.
- Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) framework to promote positive mental health, build staff capability and provide a coordinated approach to wellbeing.
- Respectful Relationships curriculum to explicitly teach social and emotional learning, respectful relationships and personal safety.
- Zones of Regulation to support students to recognise, understand and regulate their emotions.

- Victorian Curriculum 2.0 Personal and Social Capability embedded across teaching and learning to develop students' self-awareness, social awareness and relationship skills.
- Inclusive classroom practices including differentiated teaching, reasonable adjustments and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) principles to ensure all students can access learning.
- Student voice, agency and leadership opportunities to foster belonging, engagement and participation in school life.
- Restorative practices to repair relationships, resolve conflict and strengthen our school community.
- Attendance monitoring and early intervention to identify and respond to emerging wellbeing or engagement concerns.
- Working with families and external agencies to provide coordinated support for students with additional wellbeing, behavioural or learning needs.
- eSafety education to promote safe, respectful and responsible online behaviour.

Targeted

- Supporting Koorie students to engage fully in their education through a positive learning environment that recognises, respects and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, strengths and perspectives.
- Supporting English as an Additional Language (EAL) students through targeted language support, differentiated teaching practices and inclusive approaches that support all culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students to feel safe, valued and included.
- Supporting students from refugee backgrounds through trauma-informed practices, targeted wellbeing support, predictable routines and collaboration with families and external services where required.
- Providing a positive and respectful learning environment for LGBTIQA+ students by promoting inclusion, belonging and safety for all students.
- Supporting students in Out of Home Care (OoHC) through Student Support Group (SSG) meetings, Individual Learning Plans/IEPs where appropriate, learning support and collaboration with carers and relevant services.
- Supporting students with disability through the Disability Inclusion framework, including reasonable adjustments, differentiated learning, consultation with families, SSGs, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) and access to Student Support Services where required.
- Providing targeted wellbeing and social skills support in response to student wellbeing data, teacher referrals and identified needs, including support with emotional regulation, friendships, resilience and engagement.
- Applying trauma-informed approaches to support students who have experienced trauma by building positive relationships, providing predictable routines and responding to individual needs.
- Supporting international students through culturally responsive practices, transition support and wellbeing monitoring to promote positive learning and engagement outcomes.

Individual

- Building positive, trusting relationships with students who require additional support due to individual circumstances, learning needs, wellbeing concerns or barriers to engagement.
- Working collaboratively with students and families to understand individual needs and identify strategies to support engagement, learning and wellbeing.
- Developing personalised plans, including Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs), safety plans or other targeted supports where required.
- Making reasonable adjustments to the learning environment, classroom practices and routines to support student participation and success.
- Referring students to appropriate supports, including:
    - school-based wellbeing supports
    - Student Support Services (SSS)
    - allied health professionals and community services, such as counselling, mental health services, The Orange Door and other relevant agencies.

Where appropriate, Carlton Gardens Primary School supports families to engage by:

- Responding sensitively to changes in students' circumstances, health and wellbeing needs.
- Collaborating with families and external professionals to ensure coordinated support for students.
- Monitoring attendance and developing Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with students and families where required.
- Working with relevant Department of Education supports, including Koorie Engagement Support Officers where appropriate.
- Facilitating regular Student Support Group (SSG) meetings for students:
    - with a Disability Inclusion Profile or identified disability-related adjustments
    - in Out of Home Care
    - with complex learning, behavioural or wellbeing needs requiring ongoing support and monitoring.

Identifying Students in Need of Support

Carlton Gardens Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure all students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. All staff play an important role in identifying students who may require additional support and implementing strategies to promote student wellbeing, engagement and inclusion.

Carlton Gardens Primary School uses a range of information and strategies to identify students in need of additional emotional, social, behavioural or educational support, including:

- Personal, health and learning information gathered during enrolment and throughout a student's time at school.
- Attendance records and patterns of absence.
- Academic achievement and learning progress data.
- Observations by school staff, including changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connections, emotional regulation and motivation.
- Behaviour data, including Compass entries and patterns of repeated behaviours.
- Engagement and communication with students, their parents / carers and families.

- Student self-referrals or referrals from peers.
- Student Support Group (SSG) meetings, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) and Disability Inclusion processes.
- Referrals from classroom teachers, Education Support staff, school leadership or external professionals.
- Student wellbeing data, surveys and feedback to identify emerging areas of need.
- Documented recommendations from Allied Health professionals.

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 and School Philosophy 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.

Student Behavioural Expectations and Management

At Carlton Gardens Primary School, we use a School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework to establish a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment where positive behaviour is explicitly taught, acknowledged and reinforced.

Through SWPBS, students are supported to understand and demonstrate our school values of Respect, Resilience, Inclusivity and Curiosity across all settings, including classrooms, the playground and the wider school community. Behaviour expectations are explicitly taught through our whole-school wellbeing approaches.

Our approach to student behaviour focuses on:

- proactively teaching expected behaviours and social-emotional skills
- recognising and reinforcing positive behaviours through our SWPBS acknowledgement system
- using consistent language and responses across the school
- understanding the individual needs and circumstances that may contribute to student behaviour
- providing targeted and individualised supports when students require additional assistance.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive or harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination are not 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, Carlton Gardens Primary School will implement a staged response consistent with the Department of Education's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Responses will be proportionate, fair and focused on restoring relationships, supporting student engagement and teaching appropriate behaviours.

Our staged response may include:

- classroom-based responses and reteaching of expected behaviours
- restorative conversations and problem-solving
- teacher-managed consequences that are reasonable and proportionate to the behaviour
- increased monitoring, check-ins and wellbeing supports
- development of individual behaviour support strategies, including Behaviour Support Plans where required
- Student Support Group (SSG) meetings and collaboration with families and external professionals where appropriate.

Where appropriate, parents and carers will be informed about concerning behaviour, the supports being implemented and any consequences applied.

Carlton Gardens Primary School prioritises positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as withdrawal of privileges, detention or withdrawal from class. Disciplinary measures may form part of a staged response when required and will be used alongside engagement and support strategies to ensure underlying factors contributing to 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 and supported to reflect on the impact of their behaviour.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- teacher-managed consequences such as reminders, reteaching expectations, changes to seating arrangements or other reasonable responses to behaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- restorative practices
- referral to the school leadership team

- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- detention (where appropriate)
- suspension
- expulsion

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

- 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 Carlton Gardens 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.

Engaging with Families

Carlton Gardens Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we 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/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff Policy.
- providing parent/carer 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.

Evaluation

Carlton Gardens Primary School collects 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 are assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data, including the Attitudes to School Survey (AToSS)
- parent/carer feedback, including Parent/Carer Survey data
- School Staff Survey data
- behaviour and incident data, including Compass Chronicles and SWPBS data

- attendance and absence data (CASES21)
- school reports and learning data
- case management records, including IEPs, Behaviour Support Plans and SSG documentation
- Student Online Case System (SOCS) and relevant Department of Education wellbeing data.

Carlton Gardens Primary School also regularly monitors 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 is 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 or on Compass
- 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 policies and resources are relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement 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 are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Action Plan - Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed:	July, 2026
Consultation - Newsletter:	June, 2026
Consultation - School Staff:	August, 2026
Consultation - School Council:	August, 2026
Approved by:	Principal
Next scheduled review date:	2028