

Gilgai Plains 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 Gilgai Plains Primary School on 03 8779 0000 or gilgai.plains.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.

Gilgai Plains 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

1. School profile

Gilgai Plains Primary School opened on day 1 of Term 1 in 2022. The school is located at 10 Sequoia Drive, Kalkallo, 3064. The School Principal is Anthea Jamieson. Gilgai Plains Primary School is located in a newly developed community and serves the Kalkallo, and Woodstock areas. In its first year of operation, Gilgai Plains Primary School opened to 410 students from year levels F–6 and has grown to 700 students in 2023. The school boundaries are published online at findmyschool.vic.gov.au.

In Term 2 2021, the community had the opportunity to indicate their preference for the new school's name via the Engage Victoria website. Following consultation, the final decision on school naming was made by the Government.

Our state-of-the-art school caters to the diverse needs of all students and supports the needs of the growing population so students can attend a local primary school. The Kalkallo community were consulted about the design of the school and told us they valued room for students to be active, natural outdoor areas that reflect the surrounding environment and modern learning facilities that support diverse curriculums. The community values are reflected in the carefully thought-out design of this beautiful school.

Our school is surrounded by a growing and multicultural community. Our school is culturally diverse with a high percentage of families having a language background other than English. The school also has representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and our inclusive school community.

Most students live locally and have the opportunity to walk or ride to school. Gilgai Plains Primary School is building close ties to the local community and has already established itself as a thriving and supportive community hub.

At Gilgai Plains Primary School, we provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically, socially and emotionally.

Gilgai Plains Primary School includes the following facilities:

- Reception building, including library, art, food and science learning spaces
- Performing Arts and Physical Education (PAPE) building
- 4 x learning neighbourhoods
- 2 x outdoor covered hardcourts
- 1 x sports field
- 2 x bike shed
- playgrounds
- staff carpark.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Gilgai Plains 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 kindness, respect, zest and learning together at every opportunity.

Gilgai Plains Primary School's vision is to support and empower every student to fully participate, grow, learn and experience success academically, socially and emotionally.

Our Statement of Values is available on the Gilgai Plains Primary School Website.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Gilgai Plains 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 Gilgai Plains Primary School is included below:

Universal

Our whole school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion are:

- maintaining 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
- delivering a broad curriculum that supports diverse learning approaches and provides programs tailored to students' strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Gilgai Plains Primary School use the EDI (Explicit Direct Instruction) framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that researched, evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Gilgai Plains Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of 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 culture
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into various stages of their schooling
- acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitoring student attendance and implementing 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 and student surveys and student voice forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns

- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the Gilgai Plains HOUSE program which includes sporting, visual and performing arts and STEAM activities
- students are encouraged to refer to their class teacher, Wellbeing Leader, First Aid Officer, PLC (professional learning community) Leaders, Assistant Principals 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
 - Lunchtime Clubs
 - Connections Programs
 - Personal Enrichment Program
 - Start Up programs (beginning of the year)
 - Individual Targeted Support Plans to address specific behaviour
 - creating opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
 - encouraging buddy programs
 - putting measures 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

Our targeted strategies to address particular groups of students or concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles include:

- Each year group has a PLC (Professional Learning Community) Leader, who supports teachers to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their cohort through regular communication and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Social linguistic profiles will be implemented to identify the needs of all EAL (English As a second Language) students to cater to specific language needs
- Connect all Koorie students and their families with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through consultation with families and where required, student support services and individual education plans
- providing a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and following the Department of Education (the department) policy on [LGBTIQ+ Student Support](#)
- supporting all students in Out of Home Care 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
- supporting students with a disability 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

- ensuring wellbeing and health staff 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 have professional learning in, and apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- supporting students enrolled under the department's international student program in accordance with our legal obligations and department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

Individual

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

These strategies could include:

- PLC Leaders, Student Wellbeing Leaders and members of the Leadership Team will implement and organise SSGs (Student Support Groups)
- class teachers and PLC Leaders will implement Individual Learning Plans and Behaviour Support Plans in consultation with Student Wellbeing Leaders
- Student Wellbeing Leaders will facilitate the Program for Students with Disabilities
- students will be referred to Student Wellbeing staff and Student Support Services where necessary
- referral to Orange Door, CAMHS, Child First, DFFH.

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

- Class teachers, Student Wellbeing Leaders, PLC Leaders and the school leadership team build constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- Class teachers, Student Wellbeing Leaders, PLC Leaders and members of the school leadership team meet with students and their parents/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school.
- Class teachers and PLC Leaders develop Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan in consultation with Student Wellbeing Leaders.
- 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 support such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, child and adolescent mental health services or The Orange Door

- o Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular SSG 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

Gilgai Plains 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. Gilgai Plains 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
- development of snapshots for students identified as having academic, known disability, behavioural or wellbeing needs
- intervention programs for academic needs
- connections program to support students with social and emotional development and regulation
- collaborating with Student Support Services Officer personal to develop behaviour support plans
- attendance, detention & suspension data
- 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
- Student Support Groups and Individual Education Plans
- 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 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, 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

Gilgai Plains Primary School has embraced the School Wide Positive Behaviour framework and is continuing to strengthen its implementation across all areas of the school.

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy, and Code of Conduct.

Violence, bullying and other offensive and harmful behaviour such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying is responded to consistently and will be managed in accordance with Gilgai Plains Primary School's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Gilgai Plains Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents and carers 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
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the PLC Leader
- restorative practices
- detentions
- student support group meetings
- behaviour review 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:

- [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 and Training.

The Principal of Gilgai Plains 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

Gilgai Plains Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will 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 and parent Compass platform
- 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 home learning and other curriculum-related activities
- providing families with communication platforms including Seesaw and Compass
- 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

Gilgai Plains 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
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Gilgai Plains 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 and Compass platform
- online access provided to staff at induction – Staff directed to 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 of Education policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
 - [Behaviour - Students](#)
 - [Child Safe Standards](#)
 - [Expulsions](#)
 - [Koorie Education](#)
 - [LGBTIQ+ Student Support](#)
 - [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
 - [Student Engagement](#)
 - [Students with Disability](#)
 - [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
 - [Suspensions](#)
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The following school policies are also relevant to this policy:

- [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	March 2026
Consultation	School Council - 12/03/2026
Approved by	Principal – Anthea Jamieson
Next scheduled review date	March 2028