
Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Milawa Primary School on 03 5727 3243 or milawa.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.

Milawa 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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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

Milawa Primary school is a rural school located approximately 15 kilometres from the Rural City of Wangaratta. The school established in 1907 has serviced the town of Milawa and surrounding hamlets during this time and has become the hub for state education with the closure of many of the schools that once existed in these communities. As such the school has enrolments from smaller towns such as Tarrawingee, Markwood and Carboor.

The school has a combination of new and more traditional facilities. The older part of the school includes the original school building as well as an additional three classrooms, an administration area and school kitchen. These classrooms are utilised for both generalist classrooms and specialist classes, including a well-equipped library, LOTE and Instrumental Music. In 2010 the BER program saw the placement of an open learning space that contains 4 class spaces as well as staff offices. The grounds are spacious and engaging for students and well maintained by contractors and parental support. The schools current SFOE stands at low.

Milawa and the surrounding district provides a lifestyle of choice for our families and as such there has been a long standing support from the community for the school. Enrolments are steady with around 60 students for 2024. The school is staffed with 4 full time highly experienced classroom teachers, a tutor teacher, a business manager, part time LOTE Italian teacher, a full-time education support assistant and a Principal. The school also has the MACC (ART) and MARC (Library) services as well as specialist programs in Environmental Science and Indigenous Studies, PE, Digi Tech, Performing Arts, Kitchen Garden and with Instrumental Music available also. All teaching staff are members of the School Improvement Team.

The school has strong curriculum and programs in literacy and numeracy. Through engagement in high level professional learning, our pedagogy and practice has been refined to provide explicit planning and innovative instruction in all areas. We are also well known for our proactive teaching of emotional intelligence, and we have recently begun our journey with School Wide Positive Behaviours approach, which is well supported with our Mental Health Leading Teacher.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Milawa 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 engage, respect, create, connect at every opportunity.

At Milawa Primary School we educate our young people to be engaged in their learning, respectful of themselves, others, and the environment, creative in thinking and doing and connected with their school, community, and their world.

At Milawa Primary School we are 'large enough to excel, small enough to care. Our mission is to provide the best possible education so that every learner is empowered to learn and achieve, experiencing high quality teaching practice that promotes learning and wellbeing, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for lifelong learning and to shape the world around them.



**MILAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL
SWPBS**

Vision



At Milawa Primary School we educate our young people to be **engaged** in their learning, **respectful** of themselves, others, and the environment, **creative** in thinking and doing, and **connected** with their school, community, and their world.

'Engage, Respect, Create, Connect' reflects our commitment to a positive, inclusive, diverse, and supportive school climate where all individuals can grow academically, socially, and emotionally. By embracing SWPBS we enable a nurturing learning environment that empowers all students to become resilient, empathetic, and grateful individuals ready to thrive in an ever-changing world.



We believe that 'teaching behaviour as relentlessly as we teach reading or other academic content is the ultimate act of prevention, promise, and power' for our young people. Algozzine, Wang and Violette, 2011.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Milawa 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

- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support approach, with clearly documented expected behaviours, teaching and acknowledgement systems for these expected behaviours and clearly outlined processes for minor and major behaviours
- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Prioritising 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 to ensure that students are able to learn subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Teachers at Milawa Primary School use an 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 Milawa 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 support students moving into different 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 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 circle time, wellbeing lessons and they are encouraged to speak with their teachers or the Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Creating opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through athletics, regular whole school excursions, incursions, music programs and buddy programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead or Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, and complementary programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - We will introduce elements from SAFE Schools as appropriate
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Buddy programs, student leadership opportunities
- 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 class group has a teacher responsible for their class who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- 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 according to the Marrung Education Plan
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background
- 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 Learning 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
- 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

Milawa Primary School 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 Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- 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, NESAY, child and adolescent mental health services or Orange Door
 - 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 Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Milawa 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Milawa 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, 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
- report behaviours of concern to their or others' safety, learning and/or wellbeing

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/Student code of conduct.

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. 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, Milawa 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 implement 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 as per our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support approach
- withdrawal of privileges
- restorative practices
- 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.

The Principal of Milawa 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.



MILAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL
SWPBS
EXPECTED CLASSROOM BEHAVIOURS



ENGAGE	RESPECT	CREATE	CONNECT
We give our best effort to learning Have a go and try new things Ask questions Work towards learning goals Listen to and follow instructions Be an active learner Complete learning tasks	We keep bodies to ourselves Care for and organise learning resources Only touch our own belongings Use kind and respectful language Move safely in and around the learning spaces Use resources in a sustainable way Do not distract others from their learning	Share our work with others and display our learning Make suggestions and share ideas Express our opinion Make, say, do and write about our learning Imagine, aspire and create new possibilities for ourselves and the world	Collaborate with learning partners and encourage each other Consider and learn from others' thoughts and opinions Use digital technology responsibly Learn about the world around us

At Milawa Primary School we are engaged learners who aim high and strive to be our very best. We're mindful of our classmates and respect each others' right to learn. We care for the learning environment, and use resources sustainably. We make mistakes, try new things and encourage each other as we learn together.



MILAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL SWPBS EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS NON CLASSROOM SETTING








	ENGAGE	RESPECT	CREATE	CONNECT
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> when finished, return quickly to learning remember to go at recess and lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we close the door keep feet on the floor, do not climb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we wash our hands put rubbish in the bin tell an adult if something needs fixing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we say thanks to our cleaner do not hang around outside, connect with friends in the playground or class
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we agree on the rules at the start of a game, and we stick to them work hard to include everybody 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use kind words eat only in eating areas put rubbish in the bin pack up and return equipment climb safe things do not use our bodies to solve problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make new friends explore new games care for the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> include others be an upstander seek help from an adult
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we greet the driver when we get on thank the driver when we get off ask the driver questions when the bus is not moving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we enter and exit the bus with care use kind words and actions do not eat on the bus put any rubbish we make or see in the bin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we wear our seatbelts stay in our seat keep our hands and feet to ourselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we report any dangerous or unkind behaviour to the driver
Hallways and Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we use good manners greet others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use student doors get permission before leaving class or during break times we don't touch adult things without permission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we share and display our work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knock or ask before we go in use quiet voices and walking feet

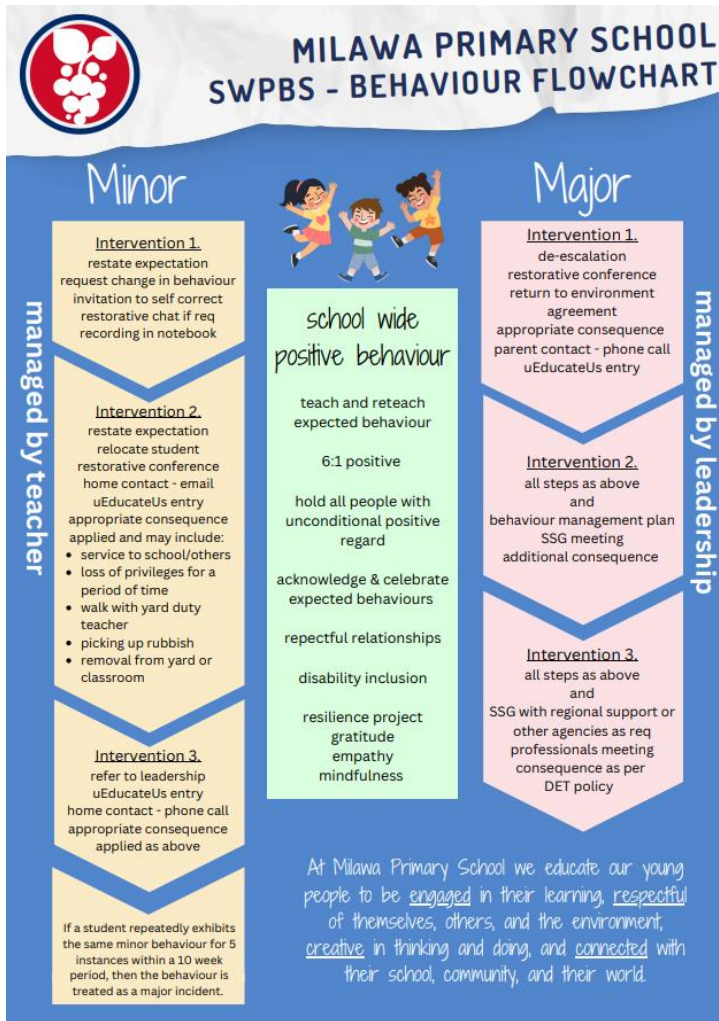
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MILAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT MINOR AND MAJOR BEHAVIOURS

	Minor	Major
Language 	name calling, teasing, arguing, inappropriate language use, swearing, discrimination	swearing
Environment + Property 	littering, stealing, trespass, destruction or misuse of property, destruction of the environment, mismanagement of belongings	vandalism
Engagement 	ignoring requests, being late, non-disclosure of incidents, non-participation, failure to follow uniform policy, mobile phone use, tantrum	absconding meltdown
Social Interaction 	dishonesty, distracting others, interrupting, deliberate interference, exclusion, specific target in a game	sexualised behaviour online defamation online sharing of images without consent
Physical 	unwanted or unnecessary physical contact, rough play, careless collision, throwing balls or similar at people, construction of weapons, hitting or kicking	dangerous physical contact use or possession of dangerous weapons

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7. Engaging with families

Milawa 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 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

Milawa 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
- SWPBS Milaward data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Milawa 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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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](#)
- [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 and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2024
Consultation	School Council, Parents, Students, School Staff
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before July 2026