



# SOMERS PRIMARY SCHOOL – STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

## REVIEW CYCLE

*Ratified by School Council: Feb 2019*

*Review Date: Feb 2020*

## 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.

Somers 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 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. Engagement strategies
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Established in 1930, Somers Primary School is small community primary school located in Somers, Victoria, on the shores of Westernport Bay. The school has grown in the past few years, and the school's current enrolment is close to 300 students, many of whom come from outside our local area. Despite this growth, Somers still retains the unique characteristics of a small school. The school's Student Family Occupation and Education Index is around 0.31, indicating a higher socio-

economic family population compared with the Victorian median. The school staff consists of a Principal and Assistant Principal, 16.1 FTE teachers and around 14 FTE support staff.

Somers Primary School prides itself on being a positive and inclusive learning environment. Around 6% of students coming from families connected to the closely-located Cerberus Naval Base, 5% indigenous students and around 9 students receiving additional funding under the Program for Students with Disabilities.

Somers Primary School runs a well-attended Out of School Hours Care service for families.

Somers Primary School provides a diverse and engaging curriculum focused on meeting the personalised needs of each student. To do this, we offer a range of classroom, specialist and extra curricula programs in the school, including Visual and Performing Arts, Sport and Physical Education, Science and Digital Technologies, Indonesian, Student Wellbeing Programs, Literacy and Numeracy intervention and extension and much more.

Somers Primary School is supported by an amazing parent and family community who contribute to a range of projects and programs around the school, including Book Circles, the Somers School Garden, Somers Primary School Council and the Annual Somers Primary School Arts Fair. The school works harmoniously with local community groups and organisations to nurture the unique character of the Somers community.

During the 2017, the school has developed a new strategic plan to continue to improve learning outcomes across the curriculum, and enhance student engagement and wellbeing across the school. The school is focused on using evidence to create a personalised, relevant and engaging curriculum and teaching approach for students that ensures that all children are making greater than expected growth in their learning. To achieve this, a number of structural changes have recently taken place to enable professional learning, staff collaboration and consistent teaching approaches.

Our school values Collaboration, Learning, Respect and Engagement.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Somers 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 Learning, Respect, Engagement and Collaboration at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to enhance learning, wellbeing and engagement outcomes for all students through the application of evidence-based, high-impact teaching and learning.

## 3. Engagement strategies

Somers Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. 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 (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
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- 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
- deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students can engage in subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Somers Primary School use High Impact Teaching Strategies within our 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 Somers 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 AITSL and VIT standards
- 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
- 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 in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor 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, the Junior School Council and Year 6 Student Leadership positions. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through our Inspire Program, sport days, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the 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, 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
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Rights, Responsibilities and Respectful Relationships
  - KidsMatter
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peer support programs

### Targeted

Each student has a classroom teacher, who monitors the health, wellbeing and engagement of students in their class. Each Professional Learning Team has a Communication and Administration Leader, a senior teacher, who represents each PLT on the Student Wellbeing Team and

communicates students who need targeted support to this team. This team meets fortnightly and can plan for targeted strategies, including:

- changes to classroom programming and practice
- targeted support plans to improve mental health and wellbeing, learning outcomes or engagement
- wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in small targeted groups 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

In addition to this:

- All indigenous students to be identified at the start of each year to develop ILPs at SSG meetings.
- Students from defence-force families to have contact with DSTA aide (where available)
- All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment

#### Individual

- Student Support Groups, see:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Support Services
- referral to Child Protection, Child First, Headspace
- Navigator
- Lookout
- Student Development Centre

#### Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- Communicating systematically to ensure all parents are heard and feel welcomed.
- being aware, 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
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - who are indigenous
  - 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

Classroom teachers, Principal and Assistant Principal will monitor and act on the following.

- 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 and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

Once identified, student should be referred to the Student Wellbeing team via Communication and Admin Leaders as soon as possible.

## 5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of the Somers Primary School community:

- Have a right to feel safe
- Have a right to be treated with respect
- Have the right to learn without being disrupted.

All members of the Somers Primary School community have a responsibility to respect and maintain these rights of others in our community.

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.

Somers Primary School will take a Restorative Practices approach to addressing conflicts at school. Principles of procedural fairness will be maintained by the school. Parents will be encouraged to contact their child's classroom teacher (or if necessary, school leadership) to solve issues at school.

## 6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Somers Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Somers Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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 Principal or Assistant Principal
- restorative practices
- development of behaviour support plans
- development of behaviour diaries
- suspension

- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>  
Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

## 7. Engaging with families

Somers 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
- 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

Somers 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
- SOCS