



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Child Safe Standard 7



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

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 Heights 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Ascot Vale Heights School is a state government school that caters for students with a cognitive disability from five to eighteen years of age. Students need to meet the eligibility requirements for enrolment.

The school's city location delivers easy access to public transport to the city and opens up the resources of the city of Melbourne for program enrichment and diversity that students are able to experience. Students are from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Our school is culturally diverse with 40% of families having a language background other than English. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community. The school was established in 1980 and currently there are 114 students and 36 school staff members including the Principal, two Assistant Principals, Leading Teacher and a Learning Specialist.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Ascot Vale Heights School's Statement of Values and School Vision 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 **Respect, Responsibility, Cooperation, Commitment and Honesty**.

The school's vision, **'Every student, every day to be given the opportunity to be the best they can be'** is at the forefront of everything that we do to ensure that all students experience success and achieve their learning goals established in their Individual Learning Plans.

The school has created wonderful learning spaces for the students that are well resourced and cater for the individual learning styles and needs of the students. Every student has access to digital technologies to support their learning and ability to communicate. They engage in new digital platforms through the many applications that are available to them.

Travel Education for our senior students is focused on increasing the ability of students to travel independently and safely using Public Transport. The school's location makes this program extremely accessible and viable for the students engaged in this program.

The school values the partnership of parents and carers in the education of your child whether it is classroom support, school council or engagement in whole school celebrations. Their support will make a difference to the school and the learning that is delivered to the students.

The curriculum of the school is the Victorian Curriculum and there is a strong focus on English, Mathematics and Student Wellbeing and Engagement.

The school offers Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and ASDAN for year 11 and 12 students. The school is proud of the achievements that the students have made in undertaking this certificate and the increased vocation options that have been delivered through this program.

3. Engagement strategies

Ascot Vale Heights 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.

- school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion.
- 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 the Victorian Curriculum including VET programs, ASDAN and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Ascot Vale Heights 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
- 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 the Student Voice Team (STV). Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Learning Centre Leader, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as: Respectful Relationships
- each section of the school (Primary and Secondary) have a Learning Centre Leader who will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their section, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor
- Ascot Vale Heights School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Individual

Ascot Vale Heights 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, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
 - 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
- 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 Heights School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Ascot Vale Heights 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
- 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, 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 their Learning Centre Leader or a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

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 Ascot Vale Heights School's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Ascot Vale Heights 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 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 Primary and/or Secondary coordinator
- 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 Heights School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

Ascot Vale Heights 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 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 Heights 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
- incident data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS (Student Online Case system)

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 as annual reference in school newsletter

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

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safe Standards.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	16/08/2021
Consultation	School council – September 7 th 2021
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2023