



# STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Golden Square Primary School 03 5443 6877

## 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, supportive and inclusive 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.

Golden Square 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 in creating and maintaining a safe, kind, respectful, 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision

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## Policy

### 1. School Profile

Golden Square Primary School is a result of a merger between two primary schools, which were commonly referred to as Maple Street and Laurel Street Primary schools. While the new building was being constructed on the Maple Street site, the school was combined at Laurel Street. Since 2015, the school has operated as Golden Square Primary School.

Golden Square Primary School is located 132 kms north of Melbourne. The school is located close to the local Golden Square shopping centre and sporting facilities. Our school boundary was reduced in 2019 and there is limited room for future land developments.

We have approximately 270 students enrolled from Prep to Grade 6 and 36 school staff members, including: 2 principal class employees, 1 Learning Specialist and 1 Lead Teacher.

We are starting to see greater cultural diversity in our student population as the city of Bendigo becomes a chosen place for families relocating to Australia. The school is seeking to establish stronger understandings and celebrations of cultural diversity, including those of our First Nation's people.

Golden Square Primary School strives to create an inclusive school community and aims to increase parents' and carers' engagement in their children's learning.

### 2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

Golden Square 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 *Respect, Safety, and Learning*.

#### **Mission**

*To engage all children in a high-quality education where they will thrive in their social, emotional and academic journey.*

#### **Vision**

*Our Golden Square Primary School community will work collaboratively in a safe, kind and respectful environment that inspires a passion and curiosity for learning.*

Our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* is available online at: <https://www.gsquareps.vic.edu.au>

### 3. Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Golden Square Primary School is continuing to develop a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may require additional social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn. We also acknowledge that the support provided will continue to change over time as we engage in new learning that allows us to expand our professional knowledge and practices.

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, parents and carers.
- Prioritise positive, respectful 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, Parents/Carers Opinion Survey data, student behavioural data and school-level assessment data.
- Implementing evidence-based high-impact teaching strategies within an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction. This framework enables us to effectively respond to the 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/carers 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.
- Regularly recognising positive behaviour and student achievement throughout the day and celebrating formally at school assemblies and communicating to parents/carers in various ways.
- Monitoring student attendance and implementing improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.
- The value of student voice is recognised, and we are working with our students to provide authentic opportunities and platforms to enhance engagement in learning.
- Creating opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school activities such as swimming, athletics, performing arts programs, lunchtime groups, and peer support programs.
- Encouraging students to seek assistance to seek assistance from their classroom teachers, our Mental Health & Wellbeing Leader, 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 continue to develop and implement the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework.
- We are explicitly and implicitly modelling and teaching Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships.
- Creating opportunities for students to promote positive social interactions through a variety of activities (i.e. recess and lunchtime activities, sports teams, clubs, student-led events).
- Actively encouraging inclusive practices from all members of our community.

### **Targeted**

- Engagement with our Koorie Engagement Support Officer(s) to develop an environment that is culturally inclusive for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.
- Engagement with our Koorie Engagement Support Officer(s) to assist in the building of relationships with families based on respect and trust.
- All students who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders will have an Individual Education Plan.
- 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 Education Plan* and a *Student Support Group* (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment.
- Staff will undertake specific health training required to ensure that children with specific medical conditions have their health needs met.
- 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, implementing the learning from our involvement in the *Berry Street Education Model* training.
- EAL students and their families will be supported in accordance with the Department's *EAL – Provision for Newly Arrived Students policy*.

### **Individual**

- Building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- Meetings with students and their parent/carer to discuss how best to support the student to engage with school.
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan, and/or Behaviour Support Plan, and/or Safety Plan as required.
- Considering reasonable adjustments that could be made and implementing these accordingly.
- Where appropriate, working with the family and other agencies to submit a Disability Inclusion Profile as part of the Department's *Disability Inclusion Funding and Support policy*.
- Referring the student to:
  - School-based wellbeing supports.
  - Student Support Services.
  - Appropriate external supports include 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, 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 Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - who are identified through the outcome of a Disability Inclusion Profile meeting as requiring Tier 3 support.
  - in Out of Home Care.
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

#### 4. Identifying students in need of support

Golden Square 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. Golden Square Primary School will use the following information and tools to identify students who may require additional emotional, social or educational support.

- Personal, health, and learning information gathered upon enrolment and throughout the child's enrolment at our school.
- Attendance records.
- Academic performance.
- Observations by school staff, such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness, and motivation.
- Data from the implementation of SWPBS, including suspension data.
- The knowledge shared by families about their children.
- Self-referrals, referrals from peers and families.
- Referrals from allied health professionals.
- Learning opportunities provided through programs and curriculum such as *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships*.
- Information recorded from parent/carer meetings, SSGs and chronicles from Compass.

#### 5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect all students, staff, parents and carers to 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 respectfully and honestly.
- feel safe, valued, and respected in expressing their identity

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program.
- respect the right of others to learn.
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community.
- speak up about bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination, or intimidation.
- display positive behaviours that align with our *Expectations Matrix*.

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 rights and responsibilities

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

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. Racism will be managed in accordance with the Department's *Preventing and Addressing Racism in Schools* policy.

Our School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SWPBS) *Expectations Matrix* outlines acceptable behaviours that reflect the school's values. This framework will also support students in their understanding and learning of these expectations in a manner appropriate to their developmental stage. Major and Minor behaviours are outlined in our SWPBS Flowchart

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Golden Square Primary School will institute a staged response consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents/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 in-school suspensions, external suspensions, or being excluded from certain formal or informal activities or events, such as regular play time, incursions, excursions and camps.

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.
- Removal from the classroom for a period of time.
- Temporary or permanent change of class.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Designated play areas.
- Supervised play (inside or outside).
- Removal from the yard for a period of time.
- Referral to Team Leaders.
- Referral to a member of the Leadership Team.
- Completion of the school day earlier than the scheduled time.
- Exclusion from events such as incursions or excursions.
- 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 Golden Square 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

Golden Square 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 by *working as one* in the following ways. We do this by:

- Ensuring there is easy access to relevant school policies and procedures.
- Maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff.
- Providing volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities.
- Involving and informing families about how to support the learning of their child at home.
- Involving families in school decision-making as appropriate.
- Linking families to external services within the community.
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and the development of Individual Education Plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

Golden Square Primary School will collect data to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues 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
- Chronicle entries on Compass
- Child Safe reports (mandatory reporting)
- Transition Information Reports from kindergartens
- School reports
- Parent survey
- CASES21, including attendance data
- Student Online Cases System (SOCS)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Child Safe Statement of Commitment](#)
- [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)
- [Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations \(including Mandatory Reporting\)](#)
- [Respect for School Staff](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

**Policy last reviewed:** 22nd October 2025

**Consultation:** Ongoing Consultation – available via school website

**Approved by:** Principal

**Next scheduled review date:** This policy is scheduled for review on 21st October 2027.