STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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 to
(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 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

Golden Square Primary School is a result of a merger in 2014 between two primary schools in the suburb 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 combined at Laurel Street for approximately one year. In June 2015 the doors of the new school were opened and the final stage of the merger was complete.

Golden Square Primary School is located 132 kms north of Melbourne. We have approximately 400 students enrolled from Foundation to Grade 6. We have 25 teachers including a specialist English as Additional Language teacher, reading recovery teachers and Information and Communication Technology teachers. There is also 15 Education Support Class employees including a wellbeing support person and chaplain.

Our school is in the heart of Golden Square surrounded by residential houses, sporting facilities and local businesses. Our school's priority is to stabilise our capacity of 400 and ensure that we are able to accommodate the students that live in our neighbourhood. Our student's regular mode of transport to school is by car, bike, scooter or foot.

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 of and partnerships with our indigenous community to show our respect and support to our first nation people.

Golden Square Primary School strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations.

2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

Golden Square Primary School recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

This Statement of Values sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Our Statement of Values acknowledges that parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

Golden Square Primary School's vision is to provide a caring and friendly environment that:

- enhances learning, personal growth and wellbeing for all students.
- creates a stimulating and supportive environment for all teachers.
- assists, informs and involves parents.

The school has four values that helps develop and promote our desired culture. These are:

- Respect – valuing people, property and the environment.
- Resilience – being able to recover quickly, control behaviour and bounce back.
- Community – working together to achieve success.
- Achievement – striving to be the best we can.

3. Engagement Strategies

Golden Square 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, Parents/Carers Opinion Survey data, student behavioural data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Golden Square Primary School are working towards 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 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 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
- positive behaviour and student achievement is regularly recognised throughout the day and celebrated formally at school assemblies and communicated to parents/carers in various ways.
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level

Working As One

- the value of student voice is recognised and we are working with our students to provide authentic opportunities and platforms so that engagement in learning is enhanced.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, performing arts programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to seek assistance from their classroom teachers, Student Wellbeing Team, 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 operate under the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework.
- we explicitly and implicitly model and teach Respectful Relationships
- opportunities for students to promote positive social interactions through a variety of activities (i.e. recess and lunchtime activities, sports teams, clubs)
- we actively encourage inclusive practices from all members of our community
Seek assistance from Koorie Engagement Support Officer for school cultural development

Group Specific

- Seek assistance from Koorie Engagement Support Officer and support for Koorie students
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Personal Learning Support Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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
- EAL students are provided with additional teaching support and Multicultural Club at least four times a term.

Individual
- Scheduling of Student Support Groups that are relevant to the particular needs of the individuals., see:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx
- Personal Learning Support Plans
- Behaviour Support Plans
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Requests for support to Student Wellbeing Team
- Referral to DET Student Support Services, e.g. Speech, Psychologist & Learning Places Connect
- referral to external services such as, Child First, CAMHS and other relevant Allied Health Professionals
- Mandatory Reports
- State Schools Relief
- Koorie Educational Support Services (KESOs)
- Lookout – support for students in Out of Home Care (OoHC)

Golden Square 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 a Personal Learning Support Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan where required
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- implementation of the Child Safe Standards
- where appropriate the school will support the families of our children.
- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing 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.
- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services
  - Appropriate external supports such as government based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First

4. Identifying students in need of support

Golden Square Primary School is committed to identifying students in need of support by utilising the following:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and throughout the enrolment.
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff, including the Student Wellbeing Team, such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- data from the implementation of SWPBS
- the knowledge shared from families about their children
- self-referrals, referrals from peers and families
- referrals from allied health professionals
- the learning opportunities provided through programs such as 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 that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other in a manner that is reflective of our current school values. 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 respectfully and honestly
- be fully supported by staff in all areas of their development

Students have the responsibility to:
- participate and allow others to fully in their educational program
- act in a manner that keeps yourself and others safe, secure and happy at school
- speak up about bullying, harassment, violence discrimination or intimidation
- listen to others who are expressing their ideas, feelings and concerns in a respectful and honest manner
- display positive behaviours that reflect our school values.

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 staff member.

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 Golden Square Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.

The School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports Expectation Matrix outlines acceptable behaviours that are reflective of our school's values. This framework will also support students in their understanding and learning of these expectations in a manner that is appropriate to their developmental stage.

The Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines will be followed. Parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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.

6. Engaging with families

We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community by working as one. We do this by:
- providing access to our school policies and procedures through our school website or by a hardcopy on request
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent 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

- linking families to external services within the community
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing Personal Learning Support Plans for students.

7. Evaluation

Golden Square Primary School will collect data 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
- chronicle entries on Compass
- anecdotal data collected from Student Support Groups
- Child Safe reports (mandatory reporting)
- Transition Information Reports from kindergartens
- Other external reports
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- 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

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION
This policy was last updated on August 9th, 2019 using the Schools Policy Template provided by the Department and is scheduled for review in August 2021.

SCHOOL COUNCIL APPROVAL OR NOTED
This policy was presented to School Council for **noting** at the meeting held on 16th October, 2019.