



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

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

Ngurruga 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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POLICY

1. School profile

Ngurruga School was established in 2026 and is located approximately 30 kilometres west of Melbourne in the East Werribee precinct on the traditional lands of the Bunurong people. The school population is drawn from the city of Wyndham and Hobsons Bay and caters for students aged 5 to 18 years who have been diagnosed with a mild to profound intellectual disability. In 2026, the school has 74 enrolments from Foundation to Year 6. By 2028, this enrolment is expected to grow to 204 students



from Foundation to Year 12. A full *Enrolment Policy*, providing detailed entry eligibility criteria, is available online or at the school's general office.

In 2026, our school is co-located with a kinder and the Yurran P-9 School, supporting an educational integration for families, where required. All three educational settings operate independently with separate Administration buildings and access into their respective schools.

Our school is a vibrant, inclusive, and community-focused learning environment committed to the academic, social, and emotional growth of every student. We take pride in offering a safe, stimulating, and engaging educational setting where student wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do.

A key priority of our school is to ensure regular attendance, active participation in learning, and the development of positive behaviours. We are guided by the School Wide Positive Behaviours Support framework (SWPBS) which underpins our approach to fostering respect, responsibility, and active citizenship among students. Through whole-school anti-bullying strategies and explicit social-emotional learning programs, we help students build resilience and make positive, respectful choices every day.

We are proud of the diversity within our school community. We value and celebrate the different cultural backgrounds, religions, abilities, and perspectives that make our school unique. All members of our community—including students, staff, parents/carers, and volunteers—are encouraged to participate fully in school life. We believe that everyone has something valuable to contribute, and we actively promote a culture of inclusion and mutual respect.

Our dedicated teaching staff work collaboratively in professional learning teams to ensure high-quality, differentiated instruction is tailored to meet the individual needs of students. With a strong focus on improving outcomes in English, Mathematics and Personal and Social Capabilities, we are committed to building both student and staff capacity and to cultivating a rich learning culture.

We support students holistically—both academically and emotionally—through a variety of targeted programs, nurturing relationships, and personalised learning pathways. Individual Education Plans (IEPs), classroom differentiation, and ongoing family engagement are key strategies in our commitment to student success.

At our school, we believe that learning is a lifelong journey, and we are proud to walk that path together with our students and families.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Ngunnawal 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, Growth and Teamwork at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to create an innovative, inclusive, and nurturing environment where every student is empowered to reach their full potential. "Learning with purpose, growing through connection".

Ngunnawal School's values are **Respect, Growth and Teamwork**.

- ✓ We **respect** each other by being kind, listening carefully, celebrating the differences and diversity of others and treating everyone fairly.
- ✓ We **grow** together by supporting one another, embracing challenges, and always striving to do our best.



- ✓ We work as a **team** by helping each other, sharing ideas, and making sure everyone feels included.

Our school values, philosophy and vision guide our organisational leadership, governance, and culture to ensure that child safety and wellbeing are embedded in our school's daily practices.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Ngurruga 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 acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students 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

- all students are supported to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#) through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families, Student Support Groups (SSGs), and Individual Education Plans (IEP)
- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers is encouraged via the promotion and communication of ongoing staff training and development, student empowerment initiatives, and community engagement opportunities.
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- all students at all year levels are involved in Circle time which further enhances peer to peer and student to teacher relationships. Circle time supports students' social and emotional development by creating a safe, inclusive space for sharing, listening, and building relationships. It helps strengthen communication skills, promotes a sense of belonging, and reinforces school values, while also preparing students to engage calmly and positively in learning.
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- being co-located with the Yurran P-9 School we facilitate cross-school connections, where possible, providing a broader learning environment for both schools and allowing a better understanding and acceptance of student inclusivity and diversity.
- the School Wide Positive Behaviours Support framework (SWPBS) underpins our approach to fostering respect, responsibility, and active citizenship among students.
- our staff participate in the [Community Understanding and Safety Training \(CUST\)](#), which strengthens the capability of school staff to build more culturally inclusive practices, including embedding Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum, and connecting with Aboriginal Community to support ongoing learning and partnership.
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- involving families and the wider community in school activities, decision-making processes, and partners to support student wellbeing and engagement (e.g. via school council, participating in school surveys, attending parent information sessions, care meetings and volunteering in the classroom)



- 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 including ASDAN, Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) to ensure that students can choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Ngurruga School use the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) 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 Ngurruga 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/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 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 Representative Council and other forums.
- students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Education Support staff, therapists, and the Leadership staff whenever they have any questions or concerns using the communication method that is most preferred by the student.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school assemblies, sports days, music programs, school celebrations and events, peer support programs and playground engagement programs
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
 - Zones of regulation
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour support (zones of regulation)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- establishing peer support programs and buddy systems where older students support younger peers, fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging positive relationships.
- 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.
- a child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the school from the top down and bottom up. A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities. Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.



Targeted

- The Wellbeing Leader runs group activities to promote health and social skills development for students, in response to specific needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff.
- Each learning centre has a Team leader, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Implementing inclusive education practices that support the diverse needs of students with disabilities. This includes providing specialized support services such as individualized education plans (IEPs), assistive technology, and differentiated instruction to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities and promote their full participation and engagement in the classroom and school community.
- Our school actively engages with Koorie Education Support Officers (KESO) to provide additional cultural and educational experiences for our Koorie students as part of our *Action Plan Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety*
- Support Programs for English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students: Offering targeted support programs and services for our EAL and all cultural and linguistically diverse students, facilitate their language development, academic achievement, and social integration. This includes English language support classes, bilingual resources, cultural orientation programs, and opportunities for peer engagement. Additional supports are provided by our Wellbeing and Engagement team and Allied health
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds through differentiated learning and wellbeing processes, care team meetings and advice from external supports such as [RESI - Refugee Education Support Initiatives](#).
- 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
- staff apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- all students from Year 10 and above are assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.
- Ngurruga School offers two distinct curriculum pathway options for senior students, aligned with their individual strengths, interests, and intended post-school pathways. These include:
 - **Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC)** - a recognised senior secondary qualification that focuses on a 'hands-on-learning' curriculum and
 - **ASDAN** - a UK accredited complimentary program for learners with special education needs and disabilities.
 - Both programs include either Structured Community Engagement or Structured Workplace Learning as part of their preparation for post-school life.
- Ngurruga School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- Students with complex medical needs are supported to access the curriculum and school facilities. Modifications occur, if required, after consultation with parents/carers and the



student's medical team, which may include doctors, paediatricians, NDIS support workers and other relevant parties.

- Support Programs for English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students: Offering targeted support programs and services for students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and all cultural and linguistically diverse students, to facilitate their language development, academic achievement, and social integration. This includes English language support in classrooms, bilingual resources, cultural orientation programs, and opportunities for peer engagement.

Individual

Ngurruga 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 students and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing a Positive Education Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up, modifying seating arrangements, providing sensory supports, or creating designated quiet areas to enhance the student's comfort and engagement.
- 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 Orange Door
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator
- students at Ngurruga School are supported through a case management and Student Support Group process. The Student's Support Group looks at risks and supportive factors and create plans with student and parent/carer support. For students in crisis, who are at risk or in a high support program such as LOOKOUT, referrals to specific services or agencies are made as part of their Individual Education Plan

Where necessary the school supports 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 Plan in line with the departments [Attendance Improvement Strategies](#) and in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESO) to ensure culturally responsive support and resources are available for Indigenous students
- 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

Ngurruga School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing & Engagement team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Ngurruga School utilises 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
- detention and suspension data
- engagement with families through regular communication
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- SSGs and IEPs
- input from internal and external resources such as school counsellors, psychologists, allied health professionals or other specialised staff members.
- collaboration with external support services or agencies involved with the student's well-being and development.
- ongoing professional development for staff to enhance their ability to recognise and identify students in need of support

In the senior years, students with special needs are provided with every opportunity to succeed. The college works with families to explore a range of pathways options via careers and course counselling, and appropriate to the student's interest, passions and potential pathways, students are able to access courses using reasonable adjustments or special provision. Possible adjustments will be discussed with the student, family and relevant teachers and may include:

- Differentiated learning resources and content delivery.
- Rescheduling classroom activities and/or a school-based assessment task.
- Extra time to complete work or an assessment task.
- Extra reading time, writing time or rest breaks.
- Alternative format exam papers (e.g. enlarged print, Braille).
- Replacing a task with a task of a different kind.
- Using a single task to assess more than one of the learning outcomes.
- Using technology (e.g. laptops), integration aides, or other special arrangements.
- Extensions of time to complete folio and production items.

Reasonable adjustments or [Special Provision](#) may also be granted including:

- Extra reading time, writing time, rest breaks.
- Alternative format exam papers (e.g. enlarged print, Braille).
- Use of assistive technology.



- A reader and/or scribe.
- A clarifier.
- Alternative examination venue (e.g. separate room, home, hospital).
- Receiving a derived score for external examinations where a student has been ill or affected by personal circumstances

Students who require additional support in the senior years will be provided with an IEP which is updated regularly to reflect a student's progress, and the supports and adjustments in place to help that student to achieve. Any reasonable adjustments or special provisions applied will be in line with VCAA special provisions.

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 welcomed, supported, and valued
- a welcoming, diverse and knowledgeable community
- achieve their goals
- 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.
- respect school property and resources, maintaining a clean and orderly environment for themselves and others.
- strive to uphold the values and principles outlined in the school's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*.

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, our Child Safety Code of conduct and within the School Wide Positive Behaviours Support framework (SWPBS), which allows the school to identify and implement evidence-based whole-school practices to enhance learning outcomes for all students.

SWPBS uses a multi-tiered system of support:



- **Tier 1:** refers to behavioural expectations and supports for all students, staff and settings and is made explicit during induction, parent meetings, staff training and in the classroom and displayed around the school.
- **Tier 2:** additional specialised group systems are put in place, led by our leadership and Wellbeing and Engagement team who implement proactive and preventative approaches for students with at-risk behaviour.
- **Tier 3:** specialised, individualised systems for students with high-risk behaviour, provided in addition to primary and secondary prevention.

Our school also uses the [Positive Classroom management strategies](#) to support learning, wellbeing and behaviour to create more purposeful and safe learning environments

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated and are managed in accordance with this policy and our *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Ngurraga School institutes a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents are 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 are applied fairly and consistently. Students are always 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 Team Leader
- 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 is expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education.

The Principal of Ngurrara School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and is not used in any circumstance at our school.

7. Engaging with families

Ngurrara School values the input of parents and carers, and we 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/carers and staff, facilitating parent involvement in school activities; encouraging parents and carers to participate in school events, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities.
- involving families in 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.
- engaging translation services where required with our linguistically diverse families.
- inviting families to attend award ceremonies when recognising and celebrating student accomplishments as well as publishing these milestones in newsletters to foster a sense of pride and engagement among families.
- providing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families with translation support services and multilingual resources to assist with communication and explaining enrolment, transition and school information.

8. Evaluation

Ngurrara School 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 are assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case System (SOCS).



Ngurruga School 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 is 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
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school also ensures 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](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support](#)
- [Koorie Education: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
- [Preventing and Addressing Racism in Schools](#)
- [Multicultural education programs and resources](#)

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*
- *Complaints Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Action Plan Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety*



POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2026
Consultation	Consultation with school council, students, staff, parents and carers will take place in Term 2, 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Term 1, 2028 - to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years thereafter.