STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 5598 3381

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.

Timboon P-12 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

Timboon P-12 School is located on one campus of eight picturesque, tree-filled hectares, 53 kilometres east of Warrnambool. The school is situated within a strong rural community, with close links to the dairy, agriculture, natural gas and tourism industries, and is near the Shipwreck Coast.

The school has a range of facilities that support learning from Foundation to Year 12, including a School/Community Library, food studies and hospitality facility, school hall, metalwork facility, canteen, Arts centre, contemporary classrooms and specialist learning spaces. The school also shares a sporting complex with the local community.

Timboon P-12 School is committed to promoting a healthy, safe, inclusive and respectful school community. We value strong partnerships between students, families, staff and the wider community to support learning, engagement and wellbeing.

Teachers work in teams to monitor student progress, plan for improvement and respond to the needs of learners across P-12. The school is focused on strengthening collaborative curriculum planning, evidence-informed teaching, inclusion, wellbeing and positive behaviour supports.

Students have access to a broad range of learning opportunities and tailored pathways that support further education, employment and training. Senior students can access VCE, VCE Vocational Major, VET, Structured Workplace Learning and School-Based Apprenticeships. Timboon P-12 School is part of the Corangamite Trade Skills Centre Cluster and offers onsite opportunities in areas including Music, Hospitality and Engineering.

As a P-12 school, Timboon P-12 is well placed to provide continuity of learning, strong relationships and a clear sense of belonging from the first year of schooling through to graduation. The school continues to build on its strong community foundations while strengthening teaching, learning, wellbeing and pathways for all students.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

At Timboon P-12 School, our vision is that every student thrives in learning and life, positively influencing their communities and the world.

We believe that all students can succeed when they are known, supported, included and challenged. Our school is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment where students feel connected to school, develop pride in themselves and their community, and are supported to reach their full potential.

Our school values of Respect, Empathy and Commitment guide the way we learn, work and interact with one another. These values are the foundation for positive relationships, strong learning cultures and a shared sense of responsibility across the school community.

We aim to inspire and support students to become curious learners, critical thinkers and active citizens. Through a focus on learning, wellbeing and connection, we work to equip students with the confidence, skills and dispositions they need to regulate themselves, set and achieve goals, contribute positively to their community, and pursue success in learning and life.

Our philosophy is centred on equity, trust, safety and high expectations for all. We recognise the important partnership between students, families, staff and the wider community in creating the conditions where every student can thrive.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Timboon P-12 School has developed a range of strategies to promote student engagement, inclusion, positive behaviour, respectful relationships and wellbeing. We recognise that students are more likely to thrive when they feel safe, known, included and connected to school. We also recognise that students' social, emotional and educational needs change over time, and that some students require additional or more individualised support to participate fully in learning and school life.

Our approach is organised across universal, targeted and individual strategies.

Universal

Our whole-school strategies to promote wellbeing, engagement, positive behaviour and inclusion include:

- maintaining high and consistent expectations for learning, behaviour and respectful relationships across the school
- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising that connection is central to student wellbeing and engagement
- embedding the school values of Respect, Empathy and Commitment as the foundation for how we learn, work and interact with one another
- creating a school culture where all students are supported to feel safe, included, connected and able to participate
- working in partnership with parents and carers to support student learning, attendance, engagement and wellbeing
- using school data, including attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent/carer feedback, behaviour data and learning data, to identify strengths, monitor trends and respond to areas of need
- delivering a broad P-12 curriculum and senior pathways program, including VCE, VCE Vocational Major, VET, Structured Workplace Learning and School-Based Apprenticeships
- supporting consistent, evidence-informed teaching practices through collaborative planning, professional learning and agreed approaches to instruction and assessment
- planning transition processes to support students as they move between year levels, sub-schools and key stages of schooling
- recognising positive behaviour, effort, growth and achievement through classroom feedback, school assemblies and communication with families
- monitoring attendance at a whole-school, cohort and individual level, and responding early where attendance concerns emerge
- providing opportunities for student voice, agency and leadership through student leadership structures, classroom feedback, surveys and student forums

- creating cross-age and community connections through school events, sport, camps, productions, music, leadership opportunities and other whole-school activities
- encouraging students to seek support from classroom teachers, Wellbeing and Engagement Leaders, Assistant Principals, wellbeing staff and the Principal when they have concerns or need assistance
- implementing school-wide approaches to positive behaviour, respectful relationships and inclusion, including Respectful Relationships and School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- providing opportunities for students to participate in clubs, lunchtime activities, sport, camps, excursions, productions and other programs that strengthen belonging and connection
- maintaining processes that support students, staff and families to identify, report and respond to harmful behaviours, including bullying, racism, discrimination, harassment and other unsafe or disrespectful conduct.

Targeted

Our targeted strategies support particular cohorts, year levels, groups of students or identified areas of need. These include:

- Wellbeing and Engagement Leaders in Years 7-12 who monitor student wellbeing, attendance, behaviour and engagement, and act as a key point of contact for students, families and staff
- targeted support for students at key transition points, including entry to school, movement between primary and secondary schooling, and pathways planning in the senior years
- support for Koorie students to engage fully in education within a learning environment that values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, including the development of Individual Education Plans where appropriate and engagement with Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- support for students with English as an Additional Language, including consultation with relevant network supports to assist with classroom adjustments and reporting requirements
- support for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to feel safe, included and connected to school
- support for students who identify as LGBTIQA+ in line with Department of Education policy and through a positive, respectful and inclusive school environment
- support for students in Out-of-Home Care in accordance with Department policy, including a Learning Mentor, Individual Education Plan, Student Support Group and referral for an Educational Needs Analysis where required
- support for students with disability through reasonable adjustments, consultation with families, Individual Education Plans and Student Support Groups where required
- targeted wellbeing, health promotion and social skills work in response to needs identified through student data, staff observations, student voice or family concerns
- trauma-informed approaches for students who have experienced trauma or significant adversity

- support for students enrolled through the International Student Program, where applicable, in line with Department policy and legal obligations
- careers and pathways support for students from Year 10 and above, including Career Action Plans, course counselling, work experience, VET, Structured Workplace Learning and School-Based Apprenticeship options
- targeted attendance, engagement or behaviour support for cohorts or groups where data indicates additional support is required.

Individual

Timboon P-12 School implements individual strategies for students who require additional or personalised support. These may include:

- building constructive relationships with students who are at risk of disengagement or who are experiencing complex personal, social, emotional or learning needs
- meeting with students and their parents/carers to identify strengths, concerns and strategies to support engagement with school
- developing and reviewing Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, Student Safety Plans, Attendance Improvement Plans and/or de-escalation plans where required
- using regular check-ins, mentoring, adjusted routines, playground supports or structured regulation strategies to support student engagement and readiness for learning
- considering reasonable adjustments to the learning environment, classroom routines, curriculum access, assessment tasks or communication processes
- involving Student Support Groups for students with disability, students in Out-of-Home Care and students with complex needs requiring ongoing monitoring and support
- referring students to school-based wellbeing supports, Student Support Services or appropriate external services where additional expertise is required
- collaborating, with consent where appropriate, with external professionals, agencies and services supporting the student or family
- engaging with regional supports, including Koorie Engagement Support Officers, LOOKOUT, Navigator and other relevant Department or community services where appropriate
- supporting families to remain connected to the school through regular communication, shared planning and sensitivity to changes in student circumstances, health and wellbeing.

Through these universal, targeted and individual strategies, Timboon P-12 School works to ensure that every student is supported to thrive in learning and life.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Timboon P-12 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Timboon P-12 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
- academic performance
- 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
- Student Support Groups and Individual Education Plans

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 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.

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 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 and School Philosophy/Student Code of Conduct.

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

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Timboon P-12 School will institute a staged response, consistent with the department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents and carers will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement 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 Wellbeing Engagement Leader (year level 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:

- Suspensions Policy
- Expulsions Policy
- Restraint and 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.

The principal of Timboon P-12 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

Timboon P-12 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/carers 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff Policy.
- providing parent/carer 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

Timboon P-12 School collects 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)

Timboon P-12 school also regularly monitors 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
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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

The following department policies and resources are relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Attendance

- Behaviour - Students
- Child Safe Standards
- Expulsions
- Koorie Education
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support
- Restraint and Seclusion
- Student Engagement
- Students with Disability
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Suspensions

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Action Plan - Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2026
Consultation	Student representative groups, parent groups, school council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2028

APPENDIX: RESPONSE TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE P-12

Purpose

This appendix explains how Timboon P-12 School responds to physical violence involving students.

Physical violence is taken seriously and always results in an immediate adult response and leadership follow-up. The school's first priority is to stop harm, restore safety and support those affected.

Responses will be fair, developmentally appropriate and consistent with the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Department of Education requirements. Fairness does not always require identical consequences. Decisions will take account of the circumstances of the incident and the individual students involved.

This appendix should be read alongside the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy and relevant Department policies.

What is physical violence?

Physical violence includes physical behaviour that causes, or creates a genuine risk of causing, injury or fear. This may include:

- hitting, punching, slapping or kicking
- pushing, tripping or aggressive grabbing
- throwing an object to harm or intimidate
- physical aggression or intimidation that creates a genuine risk to safety.

Developmentally appropriate play, accidental contact and other physical interactions will be assessed according to their context, intent, impact and level of risk.

Major behaviour response

Incidents assessed as physical violence are treated as major behaviour incidents and referred to school leadership.

Principles guiding our response

Safety first	Staff will act immediately to stop harm, attend to injuries, separate students where needed and reduce ongoing risk.
Every incident is taken seriously	Physical violence always requires leadership follow-up. However, no particular consequence is automatic.
Fairness does not always mean sameness	The school applies the same expectations and decision-making principles to all students. Responses may differ according to age, developmental capacity, disability, individual needs, intent, impact, previous behaviour and supports already provided.
Accountability and support work together	Students are expected to take responsibility for unsafe behaviour. Responses may also include teaching, reasonable adjustments, regulation support, behaviour planning and family partnership.

Students are heard and those affected are supported	Students will have an appropriate opportunity to explain what occurred. The safety, wellbeing and voice of any student or staff member harmed or made unsafe will also be considered. Privacy will be maintained, and families will receive information relating to their own child.

How the school responds

1. Immediate safety

Staff will act to stop the behaviour, separate students where necessary, attend to injuries, seek assistance and notify leadership. Immediate safety action may occur before the school has completed its investigation or made final decisions.

2. Leadership review

Leadership will gather relevant information, speak separately with students and witnesses where appropriate, review relevant plans and records, and assess whether there is any ongoing risk. The school will consider both intent and impact. Behaviour may require a significant response even where serious harm was not intended.

3. Decision about supports and consequences

The school will determine a response after considering safety and ongoing risk; harm and impact; intent and behaviour pattern; developmental and individual factors; previous supports and reasonable adjustments; available alternatives; and whether the response is necessary and proportionate.

4. Follow-up and return to learning

The school will communicate with families, provide appropriate support to affected students, document the incident and establish any safety, behaviour support or re-entry arrangements required.

Possible responses

Depending on the circumstances, the school response may include one or more of the following:

- immediate separation or removal from the situation
- first aid, wellbeing support or adult-supported regulation
- parent/carer contact
- changes to supervision, seating, yard areas, transport or timetable
- explicit teaching or reteaching of safe behaviour
- reflection or restorative preparation
- repair or apology where safe, appropriate and voluntary
- withdrawal of a relevant privilege
- supervised withdrawal from class or activities
- behaviour monitoring
- development or review of a Behaviour Support Plan, Student Safety Plan or Individual Education Plan
- a Student Support Group meeting
- referral to wellbeing, Student Support Services or external services
- suspension

- expulsion consideration in the most serious circumstances and in accordance with Department policy.

Responses may combine support, teaching and disciplinary measures.

Developmentally appropriate responses

Expectations and responses will reflect students' age and developmental capacity while maintaining the same clear standard that physical violence is unsafe and unacceptable.

For younger students, responses are more likely to emphasise immediate adult support, co-regulation, explicit teaching, practising safe alternatives and supported repair.

As students mature, there is an increasing expectation that they understand the impact of their actions, exercise self-control, participate in reflection and repair, and accept responsibility for their behaviour.

A student's age does not prevent the school from considering a serious disciplinary response where there is significant harm, repeated violence or ongoing risk. Any suspension decision will remain subject to Department requirements and must be necessary and proportionate.

Suspension

Suspension may be considered where physical violence has caused or created a significant risk of harm, seriously affected safety, wellbeing or learning, involved deliberate or repeated aggression, or where normal school routines cannot safely resume without a formal response.

Suspension is not automatic. It is a serious disciplinary measure determined by the principal or acting principal in accordance with Department of Education policy.

Before deciding to suspend a student, the principal or acting principal will consider:

- the seriousness of the behaviour and the level of harm or risk
- the impact on affected students or staff
- the student's age, developmental capacity, disability and individual circumstances
- reasonable adjustments and previous supports
- whether an alternative response can safely and effectively address the behaviour
- whether suspension is necessary and proportionate.

Where suspension occurs, the school will follow all required notification, documentation, learning continuity and return-to-school procedures.

Support for students and staff affected

The school will consider the safety, wellbeing and ongoing needs of any student or staff member harmed, threatened or made unsafe. Support may include:

- first aid or medical follow-up
- a wellbeing check-in or quiet space
- parent/carer contact
- an opportunity to explain what occurred
- temporary separation
- changes to class, yard, bus or transition arrangements
- follow-up check-ins and safety planning.

An affected student will not be required to participate in a restorative process before they are ready or where participation would not be safe or appropriate.

Communication with families

Families of students directly involved will be contacted as soon as practicable. Communication will be calm, factual and focused on:

- the safety and wellbeing of their child
- what the school understands at that time
- actions taken for their child
- further investigation or follow-up
- available supports and next steps.

The school will explain the decision-making process and actions relating to a family's own child. It cannot disclose private information about another student's consequences, disability, supports, family circumstances or behaviour plans.

Follow-up, re-entry and review

Following a serious incident or suspension, the school may establish a re-entry process before the student resumes normal routines. This may include:

- discussion with the student and parent/carer
- clear expectations for return
- safety and supervision arrangements
- agreed supports
- repair actions where appropriate
- check-ins and a review date.

Incidents of physical violence will be documented in accordance with school and Department requirements. Leadership will monitor repeated incidents, patterns of behaviour, the effectiveness of supports and consequences, and the consistency of the school's response.