

## STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

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

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Birrale PS is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students progress better when they are happy, healthy and safe. 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 intricately 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 visits, camps and excursions.

### Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

## Policy

### 1. School profile

Birralelee PS is a government primary school situated in Doncaster. It was established in 1970 and is located approximately 17km north-east of the CBD. In 2022, our student enrolment is 610 students with a considerable proportion of students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Birralelee PS offers a range of subjects tailored to meet the needs of individual students. Within the local community, Birralelee is known for its excellent academic program and the pastoral care.

Birralelee PS has grown considerably in size and a new building project will commence at the end of 2022 (to be completed in 2023), to accommodate six new classrooms and a multipurpose learning area. Four of our current portable classrooms will then be removed with further plans for more building in the forthcoming years, aligned to our masterplan.

### 2. School philosophy, vision and values

#### Philosophy

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with diverse abilities.

Our core learning focus is on confident knowledge of literacy and numeracy skills using explicit teaching practices, careful grouping of students and learning that is adjusted to student need. We have high expectations for all our students and set clear learning goals.

We support and respect all children, as well as staff, volunteers and visitors.

#### Vision

Birralelee PS's vision is to empower students to be confident, curious learners who can meet challenges at school and beyond, and to provide students with skills, abilities and attributes to sustain ongoing learning to be successful and effective contributors to society as happy, healthy and productive adults.

#### Values

Our main values include Endeavour, Co-operation, Responsibility, Care and Kindness. We state our values at every assembly when we say the following School Declaration:

*At Birralelee we learn to live and work together,  
To be responsible and think of others,  
To respect our community,  
To care for the environment,  
And strive to achieve our goals.*

### 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Birralelee PS 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 recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping students feel safe and less isolated. 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 (year group specific), and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

#### ***Universal Strategies***

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students, 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity, and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- welcoming parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, *Attitudes to School Survey*, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Birralelee PS use a teaching strategy called a 'gradual release of responsibility' (also known as '*I do, We do, You do*'), that includes demonstration, prompt, and practice to ensure that an explicit, common and shared model of instruction is consistent across the school. Our teaching model also includes evidenced-based and high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Birralelee PS 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 so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into various stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and in communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, grade and individual level
- students can contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council, The Student Reference Group (policy linked), and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and Buddies
- all students are welcome to self-refer to their class teacher, Student Wellbeing Coordinator/Assistant Principal, Year Group Leaders and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Play is The Way
- programs, visits and excursions are developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e., anger management programs or first aid)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs
- 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.

### **Targeted Strategies**

- each year group has a Team Leader, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koori students are supported to engage fully in their education in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- our English as a Second Language (EAL) students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- When we have students from refugee backgrounds, we would support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTQI+ and follow the Department's policy  
(Ref: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy>)
- all students in *Out of Home Care* are supported in accordance with the Department's policy (Ref: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/health/outofhomecare/Pages/about.aspx>), 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
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy  
(Ref: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/policies.aspx>), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans

- wellbeing and health 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 who have experienced trauma

### ***Individual Strategies***

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Learning Plans
- Behaviour Support Plans
- Student Support Services
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Mental health toolkit
- Headspace
- LOOKOUT

Birralee PS 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 an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and/or a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services
  - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First

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 Plans (AIP), in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koori Engagement Support Officers (KESOs)
- running regular Student Support Group (SSG) meetings for all students:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - Aboriginal heritage
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

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

Birrale PS 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. Birrale PS will use 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 and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

#### **5. Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity.

At school, 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.

At school, 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

Ref:

- Appendix 2: Student Code of Behaviour
- Appendix 3: Process for Responding to Breaches of Behaviour Expectations

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Student code of Behaviour.

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.

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

Our school considers, explores and implements positive, restorative 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 Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal
- 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 eight or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Birralelee PS 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

Birralelee PS values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent 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

Birralelee PS will collect information each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school-based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incident reports on Compass
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Birralelee PS will also regularly monitor available data dashboards (Compass) 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 will be 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
- 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: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- Expulsions - Decision: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>

## Further Information and Resources

The following Department of Education and Training 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
- LGBTQI+ Student Support
- Behaviour - Students
- Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Restraint and Seclusion

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*

## Appendices

1. School Philosophy
2. Student Code of Behaviour
3. Responding to Breaches of Behaviour Expectations
4. Statement - Creating a place of cultural safety for Aboriginal children

## Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	15/08/2022
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Representative Group - 03/08/2022</li><li>• Policy and Education Subcommittee - 04/08/2022</li><li>• School Council</li></ul>
Approved by	Principal <b>Ashley Ryan</b>
Next scheduled review date	August 2024

## Appendix 1

# STATEMENT OF SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY, VISION AND VALUES

### Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

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### Birrale Primary School's philosophy, vision and values

#### Philosophy

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#### Vision

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## Values

Our main values include Endeavour, Co-operation, Responsibility, Care and Kindness. We state our values at every assembly when we say the following School Declaration:

*At Birralelee we learn to live and work together,  
To be responsible and think of others,  
To respect our community,  
To care for the environment,  
And strive to achieve our goals.*

## Department of Education and Training Expectations

The programs and teaching at Birralelee PS support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to;

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance

To embed our values and philosophy in our school community, we;

- display posters that promote our values
- highlight our values in the school newsletter
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- discuss our values with students in the classroom, at meetings and at assemblies

## Statement Review and Approval

This statement will be reviewed as part of the *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* review (2024).

## Appendix 2

# STUDENT CODE OF BEHAVIOUR



### Help for non-English speakers

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

### Purpose

The purpose of this code of behaviour is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand school expectations of behaviour standards.

### Policy

At Birralelee PS, students have the right to learn, and teachers have the right to teach, in a safe and supportive environment.

#### We all have the right to:

1. Be respected and be treated well.
2. Express ourselves and be listened to courteously.
3. Feel and be safe.

#### We understand that rights also imply obligations and to reinforce the responsibility of all, the following expectations apply:

1. Be considerate of others.
2. Co-operate with others.
3. Respect other people's property.
4. Respect personal space and privacy.
5. Respect the right of others to hold an opinion.
6. Obey school rules.
7. Be polite.

#### Expectations of parents

1. To ensure children arrive at school on time and ready to begin classes at 8:50am.
2. To ensure children arrive at school in a clean, appropriate uniform, well-fed, and in a healthy.
3. State ready for learning.
4. To take a positive interest in the progress of their child's academic, social, emotional and physical efforts.
5. To encourage and support their child in all endeavours and aspects of school life.

### **Teachers' expectations**

1. To teach students that we make choices about our efforts, behaviour and interaction with others.
2. To teach students to accept responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
3. To ensure students are aware of the consequences of their behaviour.
4. To treat students compassionately and impartially.
5. To maintain contact with parents, especially regarding student welfare.
6. To maintain the professional values of integrity, respect and responsibility.

### **Consequences**

- Where serious or serial inappropriate behaviour occurs, parents will be contacted.
- Children will be held accountable for their behaviour.
- Refer to Appendices 4 – 7 of the *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* for behaviour expectations and management.

### **Review and Approval**

As part of the *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, this *Code of Behaviour* will be reviewed at the next scheduled review date (August 2024)

## Appendix 3

### PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO BREACHES OF BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

Student Rules	Classroom Teacher Responsibility	Area Co-ordinators, Assistant Principal or Principal
<p><b>Expected behaviour by students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students must obey all reasonable requests of staff</li> <li>Students must always treat others with respect</li> <li>Students must respect the rights of others to learn. No student has the right to impact the learning of others</li> <li>Students must respect the property of others</li> <li>Students must bring correct equipment to all classes</li> <li>Students must work to the best of their ability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guide to maintain classroom control:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain calm</li> <li>Warn with rights-based warning, e.g. "Your behaviour is disturbing others, please stop".</li> <li>Reassert; "I understand, and we can discuss this later. Right now, please..."</li> <li>Give a choice e.g. "You have a choice. If you do not comply, you will have to meet with me at lunchtime, afterschool" etc.</li> <li>Follow through with appropriate consequences:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Move student to another seat / isolated area of the classroom</li> <li>Seat student in a supervised area for a limited time and organise for a conference after class (restorative chat)</li> <li>Remove to another classroom for time-out</li> <li>Organise conference/restorative chat to include Area Co-ordinator / AP</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Continued misbehaviour warrants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incident Report recorded on Compass</li> <li>Inform the Team Leader, Assistant Principal or Principal</li> <li>Contact with parent after consultation with Area Co-ordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal</li> </ol>	<p><b>Implementing a staged response:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speak with the student about behaviour (clearly identify issues)</li> <li>Record misbehaviour (conduct, time &amp; frequency. Also, strategies used to curb misbehavior and results)</li> <li>Restorative talk with affected parties</li> <li>Behaviour Modification Plan or Independent Learning Plan</li> <li>Student Contract</li> <li>Parent contact</li> <li>Student support conference</li> <li>In-house Suspension</li> <li>Recommendation for external suspension and referral to Principal</li> </ul>



Student Rules	Classroom Teacher Responsibility	Area Co-ordinators, Assistant Principal or Principal
<p><b>Attendance and punctuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students must be on time to all classes</li> <li>Parents must ensure reasons for the absence have been communicated to the school</li> <li>Notification from home (i.e., signed note or medical certificate) must accompany all absences</li> <li>Students must not leave the school grounds without permission</li> <li>Students who leave school early must be signed-out by their parent / guardian / carer at the office</li> </ul>	<p>If a student is late, record the entry on Compass as 'Late.'</p> <p>Speak to student about their lateness to ascertain reasons &amp; solutions. Report to Area Co-ordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal if the issue is on-going.</p> <p>After two day's absence: Contact parents to ascertain the reason. Consult with Area Co-ordinator as to reason for the absence.</p> <p>If a student leaves the school grounds to retrieve an item, ensure that student is made aware of the school rule regarding staying within the boundaries.</p> <p>If the student leaves the school deliberately to abscond, then the principal should be informed immediately.</p>	<p>Speak to student about lateness issues.</p> <p>On-going lateness: Organise for parent conference to resolve issue.</p> <p>Follow through with student and / or parent /guardian /carer</p> <p>Inform the Principal class of reason for ongoing absence.</p> <p>If a student absconds, the principal should promptly contact the Police, the Parents, the Critical Incident Advisory Service and Child Protection.</p>
<p><b>Uniform</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students must adhere to the school uniform requirements as described in the Uniform Policy (Dress Code)</li> <li>It is compulsory for all students to always wear appropriate footwear as per the Uniform Policy</li> </ul>	<p>Remind student of the dress-code / policy.</p> <p>Remind parents of the dress-code / policy.</p> <p>Report extremes in appearance to Principal Class.</p>	<p>Student may be excluded from representing the school in out-of-school activities if the uniform is not adhered to correctly. Parents must be informed ASAP prior to the issue arising.</p>

Student Rules	Classroom Teacher Responsibility	Area Co-ordinators, Assistant Principal or Principal
<p><b>Bullying</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students must not bully, intimidate, exclude or harass others. This includes any verbal, cyber-bullying, physical or sexual behaviour, which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.</li> </ul>	<p>Report to the Team Leader, Assistant Principal or Principal.</p> <p>Teachers to use resources and to reinforce anti-bullying standards, e.g., Bully-stoppers/ Anti Cyber-bullying messages.</p> <p>Teachers to regularly address respectful behaviour and values through the 'Play is the Way' model and strategies.</p>	<p>Contact parents and involve the principal class.</p> <p>Use resources from 'Bully-stoppers,' "I've been called a bully" or "Students and Cyber-bullying" to prompt reflection.</p> <p>Refer to our school's <i>Bullying Prevention Policy</i>. Consequences may include an apology, an anti-bullying contract, student task related to anti-bullying /cyber bullying, presentation of task to year level, referral to intervention program and/or counselling.</p> <p>Some cases may warrant immediate suspension. This decision must be made by the principal.</p> <p>Student removed from classroom and parent contacted to collect students. Following procedure in <i>Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy</i> Guidance re: Immediate suspension.</p>

Student Rules	Classroom Teacher Responsibility	Area Co-ordinators, Assistant Principal or Principal
<p><b>Property and security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are to respect all school property</li> <li>Students must not enter staff room or offices unless supervised or on office-duty</li> <li>Students must place all rubbish in bins</li> <li>Students must not have the following at school: liquid-paper, chewing-gum or permanent-markers</li> <li>Students must return borrowed school material on time and in good condition</li> <li>Students must keep lockers tidy. The school will not be responsible for the loss of valuables or treasured items</li> <li>Students must leave school bags in lockers</li> <li>Electronic devices must not be used without permission</li> <li>Mobile phones must be handed to the class teacher at the start of the day and retrieved at the end of the day</li> <li>Classrooms must be left neat and tidy</li> <li>Graffiti of any kind will not be tolerated</li> </ul>	<p>Challenge behaviours around rights and responsibilities and impose consequences e.g., clean-up duties in classroom, shared areas or school grounds.</p> <p>Organise for students to remain behind and tidy the room or area.</p> <p>Confiscate electronic items until home-time</p> <p>Retain any evidence of graffiti and report to Principal Class</p> <p>For repeated offences, refer to Area Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Challenge behaviours around rights and responsibilities and impose consequence e.g., clean up duties in common room or school grounds.</p> <p>Repeat offenders have lunchtime / recess yard duty tasks, playtime detention, or accompany the teacher on yard-duty.</p> <p>In case of property damage, parents are to be notified. Student will be required to repair damage if possible. Parents may be required to meet costs if an external service is needed. If it is an extensive and persistent issue, organise a parent meeting to review behaviour and discuss responses, supports and next steps.</p>

## Appendix 4

# STATEMENT: CREATING A PLCAE OF CULTURAL SAFETY FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

At Birralee Primary School;

- all children have the right to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights, and to be encouraged and actively supported in doing so
- staff, students, volunteers, and the school community are equipped to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students
- measures are in place to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated, and any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences
- active support for the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and students and their families

### Benefits of cultural safety

Being able to express their culture makes Aboriginal children stronger and safer. Aboriginal children and young people who do not feel safe being themselves and expressing their individuality may be less willing to report abuse.

Providing safe environments for children has positive, lifelong impacts that cannot be underestimated, and cultural safety is a key dimension of safety for Aboriginal children.

### Key elements of cultural safety

#### 1. Understand identity

Identifying as Aboriginal is one part of a child or young person's identity. Like everyone, Aboriginal people have different life experiences and characteristics. Schools must recognise that each person is unique with their own characteristics, strengths and challenges.

#### 2. Respect culture

Culture and identity are linked. By supporting Aboriginal children to feel strong in their identity schools also help them enjoy their cultural rights.

Australia's colonial history has caused significant trauma and hurt that individuals, families and communities still feel today. However, Aboriginal communities have a long history of resilience and growth in the face of adversity and trauma. Birralee PS will show respect for the deep resilience of Victorian Aboriginal communities.

#### 3. Eliminate racism and abuse

Birralee PS will address all forms of racism and consider attitudes and practices that are a barrier to providing a culturally safe environment.

## **Actions being taken at Birralee PS**

To comply with this standard, Birralee PS will encourage and actively support a child or student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights in the following ways by;

- equipping staff, students, volunteers and the school community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture, and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students
- adopting measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
- addressing any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences
- actively supporting participation and inclusion in the school by Aboriginal children, students and their families
- ensuring school policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, students and their families
- developing and endorsing a statement detailing the strategies and actions the school will take.

## **Relevant standards**

- *Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards* – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises (PDF, 363KB)
- *Child Safe Standard 1* – Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

Develop child safety policies:

- *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy template*
- *Bullying Prevention Policy guidance and template*
- *Inclusion and Diversity Policy*

Consultation

- with families, students and the local Aboriginal community when developing policies to address the *Child Safe Standard 1*.

## **Examples of actions used to support cultural safety**

### **1. Building a strong school culture to support cultural inclusion**

- Begin events and meetings with an *Acknowledgement of Country* as a standing agenda item. Use this as an opportunity to pause and reflect or open a discussion.
- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.

- Make Aboriginal voice part of decision making in matters that affect Aboriginal students. Be open to different ways of doing and expressing things.
- Celebrate the local Aboriginal community in communications with students, staff, volunteers and families when opportunities arise.
- Lead on safety and inclusion for all Aboriginal students and their families. Learn more about Aboriginal history and culture, both locally and across Australia. Speak with respect and confidence about Aboriginal culture, knowledge systems and people.
- Build schoolwide knowledge of Aboriginal history, culture, perspectives, values, skills and attitudes.

## **2. Providing a welcoming environment for Aboriginal children:**

- Acknowledge and draw on the existing knowledge of Aboriginal students and their families.
- Ask for feedback from Aboriginal students and their families about what the school does well, and what can be improved.
- Implement the DET *Koorie Education Policy* to create a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Aboriginal cultures and identities (Government schools); <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/koorie-education/policy>
- Use *Koori Engagement Support Officers (KESOs)* to provide advice to government schools about creating culturally inclusive learning environments.
- Use the *Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026* to guide the school's support for Aboriginal self-determination; <https://www.vic.gov.au/marrung?Redirect=1>

## **3. Actively address racism**

- Express zero tolerance of racism in our statement of commitment to child safety included in your *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* and other documents.
- Address racism from students, staff, volunteers or visitors directly. Make sure racist speech or actions are always dealt with and the culture of the school, works to prevent incidents from occurring.
- Put school leaders at the front of anti-racist action. Discuss racism and work to address unconscious bias and racism in the school community.
- Encourage non-Aboriginal school leaders and teachers to commit to ways they can work as an effective ally to Aboriginal students, their families and communities.

## **4. Guide and train staff and volunteers**

- Train staff and volunteers to understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students.
- Work with the local Aboriginal community to build staff, volunteer and student knowledge and respect for Aboriginal culture and to promote cultural inclusion.

- Arrange *Community Understanding Safety Training (CUST)* or equivalent for staff.

## 5. Build knowledge of Aboriginal culture in school planning and curriculum

- Find out about the Traditional Owners of the land/s where the school is situated on the *Map of Indigenous Australia* and learn about the importance of acknowledging Traditional Owners.
- Include Aboriginal history and culture in professional learning for staff and volunteers and in curriculum planning for students.

## 6. Partner with Aboriginal communities

- Engage with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG) and/or the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI).
- Visit an Aboriginal cultural learning centre, such as
  - *Koori Heritage Trust* (Melbourne)
  - *Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre* (Melbourne)

## 7. Review and assess how the school supports cultural inclusion

- Use the *Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency* cultural safety continuum reflective tool to make a tailored learning and development plan focused on staff cultural competence learning needs.

## 8. Recognise key events and anniversaries.

2008 National Apology to the Stolen Generations	13 February
Close the Gap Day	18 March
Harmony Day	21 March
Sorry Day and Anniversary the 2017 Uluru Statement of the Heart	26 May
Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum	27 May
Reconciliation Week	27 May to 3 June
Mabo Day	3 June
Anniversary of the 1988 Barunga Statement	11 June
Coming of the Light	1 July
NAIDOC	First week of July
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day	4 August
International Day of Indigenous People	9 August
1963 Yirrkala Bark Petition to Parliament anniversary	14 August
Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People	13 September
Redfern Address	10 December