

STATEMENT OF VALUES AND SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the values of our school community and explain the vision, mission and objectives of our school.

POLICY

Austin School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Austin School 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.

This policy outlines our school's vision, mission, objective, values and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our staff induction handbook and on request from the school office.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

- display posters and banners that promote our values in our school
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and ceremonies.

VISION

Austin School's vision that:

Students will engage in a safe and supportive learning environment that will enhance social and emotional skills, relationships and support their transition to education and vocation.

MISSION

Austin School's mission is:

Educating the Whole Student

OBJECTIVE

Austin School's objective is to develop a culture of empathy, acceptance and encouragement for students who present with complex social and emotional needs

- enhance student social and emotional learning

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- ensure we promote student health, wellbeing and learning
- support student transition from Austin School to other educational or vocational pathways.

VALUES

Austin School's values are **respectful, inclusive and curious**.

The Austin School's values are based on the concepts of:

- understanding, acceptance and inclusion
- care, compassion and respect
- open and supportive interaction
- responsibilities and rights
- pursuit of personal best.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

Austin School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

As principals and school leaders, we will:

- model positive behaviour and effective leadership
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe behaviour is expected of everyone
- behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide safe and inclusive environments
- plan, implement and review our work to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students at school
- identify and support students who are or may be at risk
- do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential
- work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- respond appropriately when safe and inclusive behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
- inform parents of the school's communication and complaints procedures
- ask any person who is acting in an offensive, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate way to leave the school grounds
- work collaboratively with CYMHS to ensure school programs are relevant and reflect current evidence based research and practice.

As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

- model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- proactively engage with parents about student outcomes
- work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs

- communicate with the Principal and School Leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents
- treat all members of the school community with respect
- provide a safe and nurturing environment that provides opportunities for learning
- value diversity, listen insightfully, seek to understand and challenge with compassion
- provide opportunities to develop social and emotional competencies which support the transition to education, vocation and community
- have high expectations of all students responsive to their needs
- foster global citizenship by developing teaching and learning practices which value curiosity and learning
- gain understanding of each student's background, learning and social and emotional needs to plan both an individual and group program
- grow through learning in educational/instructional practice and approaches which support mental health and wellbeing
- develop and promote positive relationships with students, parents, colleagues, members of base schools and all members of the Austin school community
- work collaboratively within CYMHS multidisciplinary teams and external agencies to support the development of the whole young person
- bring enthusiasm and energy to their work
- practise self-care and value the welfare of others.

As parents and carers, we will:

- model positive behaviour to our child
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction
- take an interest in our child's school and learning
- work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child
- communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns
- support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students
- follow the school's processes for communication with staff and making complaints
- treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

As students, we will:

- be curious with our learning
- engage with life and the world around us
- respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
- respect the safety of self and others
- curious about learning and respect the right of others to learn
- co-operatively engage with one another and all members of the school community
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community.
- model positive behaviour to other students
- comply with and model school values
- behave in a safe and responsible manner

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- actively participate in school
- be active participants throughout the course of our learning
- work towards understanding and managing emotions
- grow through learning, perseverance and reflection
- understand our strengths, skills and interests.

As community members, we will:

- model positive behaviour to the school community
- treat other members of the school community with respect
- support school staff to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
- utilise the school's processes for communication with staff and submitting complaints.

UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Schools are not public places, and the Principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds (for more information, see our *Visitors Policy*).

Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students or members of our school community will not be tolerated at school, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- speaking or behaving in a rude, manipulative, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via electronic communication or social media, or over the telephone
- the use or threat of violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences by the school Principal.

At the Principal's discretion, unreasonable behaviour may be managed by:

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
- implementing specific communication protocols
- written warnings
- conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
- exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
- reports to Victoria Police
- legal action

Inappropriate student behaviour will be managed in accordance with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

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Our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* ensures that everyone in our school community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create a school that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Student Wellbeing and Engagement,

Teacher Handbook

Austin School's School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Handbook

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on September 2020 and is scheduled for review in November 2024.
Presented to School Council September 2020.