

Berengarra School

Berengarra takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 1359 (2022).

Policy

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

Berengarra 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 responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Berengarra 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

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

- promote our values across all programs in the school
- celebrate our values in our school communications
- recognise the achievements of our students who actively demonstrate our values
- discuss our values with students and staff in the classroom, meetings and assemblies.

Statement of Values and School Philosophy

School Philosophy

The philosophy of Berengarra School differentiates it from other like schools and informs and makes clear the strategic direction of the school. This in turn aligns the efforts of leadership, staff and students in order that the school is successful in achieving its aims and is true to its purpose, vision and values.

We believe that success for our students is achieved when they feel a sense of belonging through safe and meaningful relationships in a nurturing and supportive community. From this supportive base, students are best placed to engage fully in their learning, focus on their wellbeing, and develop the skills essential for progression into further education and future employment.

The philosophy of the school provides a benchmark to assess the effectiveness of its programs which are directed toward improving the learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs in the social/emotional domain.

Berengarra School Vision, Aims and Values

Vision

Our school's vision is to be recognised as a leading independent, specialist school for students experiencing significant social and emotional challenges. We will provide an innovative and effective curriculum in a wellbeing-centred environment which enables students to re-connect with learning and engage successfully in further education and future employment.

Aims

Our students will address their social and emotional challenges and achieve success in a nurturing and supportive learning community.

Our programs will utilise an innovative skills-based curriculum and implement emotional regulation techniques to engage students effectively in their learning.

Our staff will provide a nurturing learning community and build strong relationships with our students.

Our community will provide opportunities for understanding, flexibility, belonging and diversity.

School Values

At our school, we value:

Hope – moving forward with confidence and a 'chance for change' to create a positive future.

Belonging – fostering a deep sense of school community where everyone is accepted and celebrated for who they are in a respectful, inclusive and compassionate environment.

Nurturing – empowering growth and learning in a safe and supportive community.

Success – being guided to accept responsibility and face new challenges to achieve our goals.

Behavioural Expectations

Berengarra School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents/Guardians/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 Principal and school leadership, 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 student 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

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.

As parents and carers, we will:

- model positive behaviour to our child
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- encourage our child to attend 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 do our best to:

- interact positively with other students
- speak politely to our teachers and all staff
- comply with school values
- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- respect ourselves, staff, and the school environment.
- actively participate in school work and activities
- not disrupt the learning of others
- make the most of each day at Berengarra School.

As members of the Berengarra School community, we will:

- model positive behaviour to others in the school and wider 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.

Unsafe behaviours

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

Unsafe 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.

Unsafe 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 (see *Berengarra School Code of Conduct School Community*)

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school (see *Berengarra School Bullying Prevention Policy*)

Unsafe behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this Statement of Values and School Philosophy may lead to the implementation of appropriate consequences by the Principal.

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

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling session if this is considered appropriate
- implementing specific communication protocols
- verbal or written reminders or 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 policies and procedures including:

- *Bullying Prevention*
- *Care, Safety and Welfare of Students – Restrictive Interventions*
- *Exclusion from School*
- *Student Wellbeing and Engagement*
- *Students Running away from School*

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