



Promoting Positive Behaviour and Building Respectful Relationships at

St Bernadette's

Reviewed: May 2024

At St Bernadette's we strive to nurture the intellectual, physical, spiritual, social and emotional development of our students. We recognise that students can achieve more in their learning when they feel safe and supported at school. It is the responsibility of all students, staff and families to work together to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice to create a sense of belonging, safety and comfort. All members of the St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School community have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment. These rights are strengthened through the positive relationships we develop between students, staff and families.

Our school values of honesty, welcome, respect, collaboration, inclusion, faithfulness, equity and empathy together with our Agreed Ways, help to create an environment where clear expectations for appropriate behaviour are set and relationships can thrive.

Acknowledging and encouraging positive behaviours

We believe it is important to foster a positive culture. We acknowledge and encourage positive behaviours, which are in line with our school values and Agreed Ways by giving out:

- St Bernadette's achievement awards at assemblies
- House colour points
- Class based rewards e.g., stars or Dojo points which accumulate to receive a larger reward
- 'I Got Caught' stickers at break times.

St Bernadette's Agreed Ways

1. Follow directions
2. Listen to the speaker without interruption
3. Speak appropriately
4. Treat property and the environment with care
5. Move safely around the school
6. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL is the process through which we learn to recognise and manage emotions, care about ourselves and others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviours.

Social and Emotional Learning at St Bernadette's comprises the 5 following areas:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social Awareness
4. Relationship Skills
5. Responsible Decision-making

The explicit teaching of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as part of the Wellbeing strategy of the school is focused around these five core competencies. The General Capabilities of the Victorian Curriculum (Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Responsibility, Ethical Understanding and Intercultural Understanding) also provide a framework and resource for teachers to draw on when planning for teaching in Social and Emotional Learning and Wellbeing.

Teachers in consultation with the Student Wellbeing leader, are responsible for planning and assessing the explicitly taught sessions in SEL. We have a range of resources and strategies to help develop SEL competencies in our students some of which come from the *Berry Street Educational model* and the *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum*.

Of particular importance is the use of a common language to help students identify their thoughts and feelings, and consider appropriate solutions when problems arise. Some of our key concepts and strategies are:

Morning Meetings

In each learning space the day is started with a Morning Meeting, where students gather in a circle, greet each other and say prayer. The purpose of Morning Meetings is to:

1. Set a tone for respectful and engaged learning in a climate of trust
2. Build and enhance connections among students and between students and teachers
3. Merge academic, social, and emotional learning
4. Motivate students by addressing the human need to feel a sense of significance and belonging (Horizons of Hope), and to have fun

Through the repetition of many ordinary moments of respectful interaction, some extraordinary moments can occur

Mindfulness

Mindfulness restores a sense of calm in the learning space and provides students with an opportunity to reset. Benefits of mindfulness include; decreasing stress and anxiety, improving self-esteem and self-regulation, increasing calm and contributing to a positive culture. Mindfulness is practiced throughout the school in many different ways, including journaling, mindful drawing or colouring, brain breaks, meditation, showing gratitude and finding our centre. .

De-escalation and Self-regulation

We all experience heightened emotions at various times, for example, feeling extremely excited or extremely angry. While experiencing heightened emotions it can be difficult to regulate our behaviour. We teach and implement de-escalation strategies to centre heightened students, to prepare them to connect with others and themselves and to enable successful learning. It is important for adults in learning spaces to model these strategies and for students to practice them so that they can begin to self-regulate.

Growth Mindset

Mindsets are beliefs about yourself and your qualities: your intelligence, your strengths, your talents, your personality, your social skills. A growth mindset is the belief that a person's skills and qualities can be improved through dedication and hard work. At St Bernadette's we encourage students to take risks in their learning, strive for improvement, learn from their mistakes and reach their full potential, by demonstrating a growth mindset.

Buddy Program

An important feature of St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is our well established and successful transition programs. We pair our Prep students with a Year 5 Buddy to help familiarise them with our school and to settle in. This continues for these students until the completion of Year 1.

Peer Support Programs

Each year students in Year 5 take part in training to support cross-age, peer support programs (for example, Peer Mediation training or the Play Program). Peer Mediators are trained in dealing with minor conflicts and disagreements between two students. Peer mediators volunteer and are rostered in pairs or threes to monitor the school yard during lunch and recess and are recognisable by their fluoro vests. Play facilitators are trained in skills to lead collaborative games during lunch/recess times and promote student collaboration and inclusion. Teachers/Leaders will determine which program is most appropriate, given student needs and interests.

Steps used for redirecting behaviour

1. A 'friendly reminder'
2. First warning
3. Second warning: student stays in the learning space but is removed from the group.
4. Time out: student is sent to another learning space. A 'Thinking Sheet' is then completed with a teacher in the student's own time. The sheet may be sent home for the student to discuss with their parents. The student then needs to follow up by completing learning tasks that were missed and other logical consequences of their behaviour.

Change comes about through compassionate healing relationships, patience, high expectations and inclusion. All issues will be dealt with in accordance with the values of the school. We recognise that all students, regardless of any learning, behavioural, physical, emotional or social difficulties, have the right to be treated with equity, empathy, and respect. This is done in a spirit of inclusion, with the uncompromising belief that all students are capable of changing their behaviour to become citizens who contribute to society, through the example and message of Jesus Christ.

To be reviewed in 2026

Resources:

Catholic Education Melbourne, Horizons of Hope – Wellbeing in a Catholic School

Berry Street Educational Model