



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Heathmont East Primary School



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact office on (03) 9729 5439 or <https://heathmonteastps.vic.edu.au/>

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.

Heathmont East Primary 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
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POLICY

1. School profile

HEPS is situated in the leafy environment of Heathmont in the Outer Eastern suburbs of Melbourne; it is a vibrant and increasingly diverse student population. HEPS is blessed with a strong team who are collectively dedicated to lead our students in their learning.

HEPS believes that students need to develop knowledge, skills and behaviours which will prepare them for success in a world which is complex, rapidly and constantly changing, immersed in digital technologies, demanding innovative and high order thinking and understanding, and increasingly global in its outlook and



influences. We believe that for students to succeed in their challenging, yet exciting world, they need to develop the capacities to manage themselves as individuals and in relation to others, understand the world in

which they live and act effectively and responsibly in that world. With that in mind Literacy and Numeracy remain a major focus whilst still committing to a balanced education supporting a well-rounded curriculum that differentiates to our students' point of need; we continue to integrate the use of modern technologies and open-ended teaching and learning.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

"All students are empowered to learn and achieve success; to be curious, engaged, collaborative, empathetic and critical thinkers."

At HEPS, we believe that learning is a lifelong journey of growing knowledge and skills through exposure to new information, ideas and concepts across a wide range of curriculum areas. As learners, we need the ability to apply, process, make significant connections, critically reflect and articulate across differing situations to develop as individuals within a community. We work together with parents to empower all students to embrace learning, achieve their personal best and build their emotional, social and physical well-being.

We strive to provide an engaging environment that underpins the development of learning and understanding for our students. Through our values of Respect, Resilience, Teamwork and Growth, we support and challenge the development of a growth mindset; enabling our students to be intrinsically motivated, curious, critical thinkers with the ability to reflect on their own learning and beliefs.

As a school community, we have created a set of values which reflect our philosophy and community at HEPS. Each term we focus on a different value where students engage in lessons to develop a deeper understanding and methods in which to espouse the value. At our weekly assembly, the value is discussed and one child is selected as 'Star of the Week' for displaying the particular value in focus.

Respect - 'Respect for self, others, and property'

Teamwork - 'Working collaboratively and effectively with others to achieve our best'

Resilience - 'Flourishing in the face of everyday and challenging situations'

Growth - 'Recognising and celebrating social, emotional and academic growth'

Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Heathmont East Primary School 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 children and 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.

The HEPS community aims to provide a safe, supportive and productive learning environment for all students by:

- Developing each child's learning through explicit and personalised teaching
- Providing a broad range of quality teaching and learning experiences
- Engaging students in their learning and their community

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Promoting students to be curious, creative and critical thinkers

- Developing strong social competencies

Teachers at HEPS place a significant emphasis on the development of positive relationships with all students, strong, collegiate professional learning teams and the provision of a range of learning opportunities for students, both in and beyond the classroom. The school community is proud of the friendliness and inclusiveness of its students. Numerous extra-curricular activities/programs are offered including a wide range of sporting events, student leadership, instrumental music lessons, choirs, an environmental sustainability program and a well-structured camping program.

Whole School Approach

- Focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success.
- Collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole school behaviour management approach (School Wide Positive Behaviour).
- Provide predictable, consistent and fair classroom and school environments by implementing the school values behaviour matrix in every class.
- Provide physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and engagement in learning.
- Create opportunities for students to take responsibility and be involved in decision making through leadership initiatives including Junior School Council.
- Encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to plan and take an active part in the life of the school and the education of their child/ren.
- Include in the school's curriculum pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- Promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- Support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- Establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- Build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs and practises such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Positive Education
 - School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
 - Friendology
- Provide opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Offer buddy programs

Targeted

- *Koorie 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 students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through [insert any specific strategies you have in place to support CALD students]
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through our RESP program
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) 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 on [Students with Disability](#), 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
- students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

Individual

- Build constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- Meet with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- Consider if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up.
- All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Develop Individual Education Plans for students on the Program for Students with Disabilities and others who are identified with additional academic or social needs, e.g. Students who require additional support or extension.
- Develop Behaviour Support Plans for students who need individual modifications to support their behaviour.
- Work with wellbeing and health staff to 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
- Staff will discuss student needs with the Assistant Principal – Student Wellbeing
- In consultation with Assistant Principal – Student Wellbeing, the school will refer students 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 ChildFirst

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- Being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and 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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family

- Holding regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Student Support Groups, see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>

3. Identifying students in need of support

Heathmont East Primary 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. Heathmont East Primary 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*

4. 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 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.



5. Student behavioural expectations and management

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

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, Heathmont East Primary School 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 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.

Managing challenging behaviours will include:

- Establishing consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- Establishing school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/or behavioural difficulty
- Implementing a staged response when concerns arise about a student's behaviour or when a student is displaying chronic patterns of problem behaviour, to support the student (See Behaviour Management Policy)
- Discipline procedures for managing challenging behaviour as outlined in the Behaviour Management Policy
- The teaching and/or building of pro-social replacement behaviours
- Utilising evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour
- 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 Level leader
- 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>

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- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-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 and Training.

The Principal of Heathmont East Primary 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.

6. Engaging with families

Heathmont East Primary School 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.

7. Evaluation

Heathmont East Primary School will collect 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 will be assessed on an annual basis include:

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

Heathmont East Primary School will also regularly monitor 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 will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website and via Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs

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- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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 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](#)
- [LGBTIQ 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
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2024
Consultation	School community via Compass and HEPS newsletter Education sub committee School council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2026