

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the main office.

## 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 commitment to implementing wellbeing and engagement practices that address the Visible Wellbeing™ SEARCH Framework Pathways (Strengths, Emotional Management, Attention and Awareness, Relationships, Coping, Habits and Goals)
- (e) our commitment to implementing social and emotional learning practices that address the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) and Respectful Relationships framework
- (f) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour

Hawthorn West 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.

## 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

Hawthorn West Primary School is located in Melbourne's inner east in the City of Boroondara. Established in 1853, the school has a proud history of serving the local community. We have close to 510 students enrolled with the majority of our students coming from the inner-city suburbs of Hawthorn and Richmond.

Our school is culturally diverse with 20% of families having a language background other than English (EAL). We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

Hawthorn West Primary School's multi-age class structure, which is based on the belief that learning is developmental, and a focussed teaching approach enable students to grow and achieve as individuals. Students are taught in a multi-age settings and flexible grouping is used to meet student needs. We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

#### School values, philosophy and vision

Hawthorn West Primary's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values:

- **Curious** - We are curious and open to new ideas and ways of thinking
- **Confident** - We are problem solvers and use a growth mindset to show confidence in ourselves and our abilities.
- **Connected** - We foster a sense of belonging and learn in and with our community.
- **Achieving Excellence** - We challenge ourselves, strive to achieve our personal best and take responsibility for our learning.

We understand that wellbeing correlates directly to academic success and growth. VWB is not a set curriculum; it is a flexible approach, which can be applied across any subject matter, and in all contexts –primary and in the staff room. With the VWB approach, academic learning and wellbeing are truly integrated.

We aim to achieve three key goals:

- To help students and staff to clearly see their own and other's wellbeing using VWB practices (See/Hear/Feel)
- To help students and staff systematically build wellbeing using the SEARCH framework (Strengths, Emotional Management, Attention and Awareness, Relationships, Coping, Habits and Goals).
- To facilitate learning through the visible wellbeing classroom process (Goals, Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, Activities and Self-reflections using a rubric).

#### Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Hawthorn West Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. 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.

Our values are an integral part of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework. SWPBS is an evidence-based, whole school approach and we explicitly teach our values to support students to develop resilience, improve learning and engagement and build positive and respectful relationships.

The primary prevention of SWPBS consists of expectations and a school culture and environment that is developed and taught by school staff to achieve:

- high but achievable expectations for student learning and behaviour
- strategies to identify and address unacceptable behaviours
- positive and supportive teacher/student relationships
- positive and supportive student/student relationships.

Hawthorn West Primary School is a Respectful Relationships school. Combined with the SWPBS framework the whole school approach also includes the objectives of:

- establishing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment
- building positive social norms
- generates a sense of connectedness to teachers and peers
- explicitly teaches social and emotional skills
- generates a commitment to the academic goals of the school.

#### Universal

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and 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 all 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 Hawthorn West Primary School plan collaboratively to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
  
- teachers at Hawthorn West Primary School 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
- celebrating and acknowledging student achievement and positive behaviour in the classroom at school assemblies with 'Student of the Week' and via the newsletter
- 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 different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups.
- opportunities for senior student leadership roles in Year 6 with the 'Year 6 Leadership Program' as a forum for student voice
- implementing wellbeing, social and emotional practices, including Respectful Relationships, Visible Wellbeing™, Positive Detective™, Zones of Regulation and Circle Time
- engaging with programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour such as Click Against Hate, Courage to Care, Bravehearts and Cyber Safety
- providing a wide variety of engaging, inclusive curriculum and extracurricular activities that includes Buddies, Interschool Sport, State School Spectacular, Concert Band, Sing West Choir, Aerobics, camp programs from F-6, lunch time activities such as STEM Club, Chess Club, library, Cool Club
- providing opportunities for students to connect with students from our Sister School, Nagatadai Elementary in the city of Yokohama, Japan.
- all students are welcome to approach, Assistant Principals 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
  - School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Program
- 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

- 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 the provision of a support program if required or provided with classroom program to support their transition.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through the provision of an Individual Learning Plan and access to support programs as required.

- 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 \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- 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
- high-ability students in Years 3 – 6 have the opportunity to participate in online enrichment and extension programs offered by the Victorian High-Ability program
- 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

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Hawthorn West Primary School 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 student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- 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 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 Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

## 2. Identifying students in need of support

Hawthorn West 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. Hawthorn West 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 peer

## 3. 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
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- be familiar with the school's values and SWPBS Behaviour Matrix
- 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.

#### **4. Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and the Hawthorn West School Wide Positive Behaviours Program (SWPBS)

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 and in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Hawthorn West 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 implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

The school leadership team will:

- lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues by incorporating student wellbeing at the center of school business
- monitor the profile of behaviour issues at the school and the effectiveness of implemented strategies
- provide appropriate professional development opportunities for all staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours.

Teachers at Hawthorn West Primary School will:

- use the Student Engagement Policy and the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework as a basis for supporting student behaviour
- explicitly teach school values and positive behaviours from the SWPBS Matrix

- employ behaviour management strategies that reflect the positive behaviours expected from students and which focus on supporting positive behaviours
- build a collegiate / supportive atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and assist each other to reflect on one's own behaviour management approaches
- involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary.

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 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Hawthorn West 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.

## 5. Engaging with families

Hawthorn West 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.

## 6. Evaluation

Hawthorn West 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 recorded on Compass
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Hawthorn West 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 the Compass portal

- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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/carer 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	November 2024
Consultation	Staff – consultation August 2022 Parent – consultation August 2022 School Council consultation August 2022
Approved by	Principal – Nerida Smith
Next scheduled review date	November 2026