



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school on 9803 8311 or email: burwood.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.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.

Burwood Heights 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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POLICY

1. School profile

Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten is located in the City of Whitehorse and is a member of the Riversdale Network of schools and of the International Baccalaureate Network of Schools. The school was built in 1966 and from 2010 – 2011 underwent building modernization works. The once spacious grounds are gradually being encroached on, due to the establishment of buildings such as the Building Revolution facility, the kindergarten and three portable classrooms. There are three established play-equipment areas for the different sections of the school. Security fencing surrounds the perimeter of the school.

Burwood Heights Primary School is committed to preparing our students to develop the knowledge and skills that will help them become life-long learners who are successful and happy individuals who participate fully in, and contribute to, our community and the world around us. Burwood Heights Primary School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School authorised to deliver the Primary Years Program (PYP). The IB Learner Profile represents ten attributes valued by Burwood Heights Primary School. We believe that these attributes and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities helping to create a better and more peaceful world. These attributes are inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective. Our intent is to provide a learning environment where all students are fully engaged in their learning, based on a whole-school inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning.

The school caters for children from three to five years-of-age (kindergarten managed by School Council on-site) and from Prep to Year Six in the primary school section. Staff consists of 25.5 equivalent full-time staff, 2.4 Principal Class, 26.1 teachers, 10.6 Education Support staff, 4 Early Years teachers and 5 Kindergarten Assistants. There are twenty classes and students have specialist sessions in Visual Art, French, Physical Education, Homecrafts and Science. The profile of the school has rapidly changed with many financially independent families arriving from overseas. Our overall socio-economic profile which is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education Index, is now in the High Similar Schools Group. We have many families who have come from overseas. 40% of students have English as a Second Language.

Family mobility rate is high, due largely to the increased housing prices and expensive rental accommodation. The Outdoor Learning Classroom, Choir, Dance and Glee Groups, Coding Club, Art Club, House Spirit Cup as well as many other extra-curricular activities provide students with the opportunity to all experience success. The family barbeques, parent information evenings, online communication as well as school newsletter, and special whole-school activities assist in forging strong connections with families. We strive to achieve a positive school culture, where student belonging, friendships and connectedness are promoted, and diversity is valued.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Burwood Heights Primary School'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 of respect, sensitivity, honesty, responsibility and achievement at every opportunity as well as the attributes of the Learner Profile.

Our school's vision is to prepare our students to develop the knowledge and skills that will help them become life-long learners who are successful and happy individuals who participate fully in and contribute to our community and the world around us.

Our Statement of Values is available online at:

https://www.burwoodhps.vic.edu.au/uploaded_files/media/statement_of_values_and_school_philosophy_2025__2028.pdf

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Burwood Heights 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.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

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 Burwood Heights Primary School use an instructional framework 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 Burwood Heights 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
- 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 Student Representative Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school performances, sport, dance, visual arts and music programs.

- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Welfare Officer, Level Co-ordinator, Assistant Principal 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:
 - Daniel Morecombe Child Safe
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e., anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, before school, recess, lunchtime and afterschool activities)
- buddy programs
- 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

Our targeted strategies to address particular groups of students or concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles include:

- each year group has a Year Group Leader/Coordinator, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- 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 – refer to our Action Plan – Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students (CALD students) are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through Circle Time, Buddy program, Health and Wellbeing Curriculum and the International Baccalaureate Primary Year Programme which, has a focus on international mindedness.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through regular check-ins with students and their families, providing extra support and resources when required and assisting them to engage with external support agencies, if 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](#).
- 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

Burwood Heights 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 The Orange Door

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 Education 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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Burwood Heights 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. Burwood Heights 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
- school based surveys and student reflections
- Student Support Groups and Individual Education Plans

5. 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 and School Philosophy 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, 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination is not 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, Burwood Heights 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.

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
- referral to the 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:

- [Suspensions Policy](#)
- [Expulsions Policy](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion Policy](#)

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged eight or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Burwood Heights 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.

7. Engaging with families

Burwood Heights 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
- co-ordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Burwood Heights 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
- daily check-ins for Middle and Senior School students
- attendance data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Burwood Heights 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
- Included in staff induction processes
- 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 policies and resources are relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Koorie Education](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Suspensions](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Bullying Prevention](#)
- [Child Safety Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2026
Consultation	School Leaders – 17/06/2026 School Council – 17/06/2026 Staff – 10/06/2026 School Community – information and link to policy published on Compass on 22/06/2026 and will be in the school newsletter on 16/07/2026.
Approved by	Principal – Esther Wood
Next scheduled review date	June 2028