



## STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

### 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 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 is an educational sanctuary in the urban hub of Forest Hill, Burwood East and Vermont South, and is situated in the City of Whitehorse. The school was built in 1966 and during the last decade has undergone 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 two portable classrooms. There are three established play-equipment areas for the different sections of the school. Security fencing surrounds the perimeter of the school, except for two areas – the staff carpark and a small section between the oval and Mahoneys Roads. The grounds are maintained to a high standard due to employing a groundsman. The school buildings are used for Taekwondo instruction, music tuition, English

Language classes, and community cooking sessions. The Outdoor Learning Classroom incorporates a well-equipped Homecrafts facility, a Science shed and an interactive "back yard" garden, where students can explore and enjoy climbing into tree-houses, building cubby houses, making wooden toys, cooking outdoors, dressing-up, digging in the dirt, growing vegetables and fruits and much more. Abutting this area is a hall, which was built forty years ago, and is utilized by the After-Care service, incursions and Play Group. The site is shared by Forest Hill Secondary College, with clearly defined boundaries of an internal entrance road and security fencing.

The school is a member of the recently formed Riversdale Network (previously Whitehorse and Booroondara), where there is a collective commitment to improve learning outcomes for all students. Our FISO group is a small one and includes Donvale Primary and Kerrimuir, where visits between the schools are arranged each term and ideas shared. We are primarily a feeder school to Forest Hill College, Blackburn High School, Kooyung Secondary College, Vermont Secondary College and Highvale Secondary College. Students do attend Box Hill, Camberwell High School, Canterbury Girls' School and Private and Catholic schools.

The school caters for students from Preparatory to Year Six. The on-site kindergarten provides a wonderful opportunity for families to become part of the school community when their children are three years of age. The school socio-economic and multicultural profile is rapidly changing with many more affluent Chinese families moving into the increasingly expensive housing estates in this area. There is a Ministry of Housing estate nearby. Although our student population is increasing it is not stable from one month to another, indicating the high mobility we have in any one month. Rental prices have increased substantially and house packages are more affordable in outer areas. There are transitional houses in the area available for those in crises situations and families can be there for periods of three weeks to two years. It is common to have over half of our students of Year Six students to have not commenced at our school. International Student Enrolment places are available in all year levels.

Leadership is distributive. There are twenty-nine teaching staff (five of whom are employed part-time) and thirteen Education Support staff working together to ensure the highest-level teaching and learning environment that we can create for our three hundred and fifty-five students, who are from at least twenty-eight different cultural backgrounds in Prep to Year Six. There are two teaching staff, two Diploma qualified staff and two Kindergarten Assistants in the School Council operated kindergarten. Current Kindergarten enrolment is eighty-three children.

The school's guiding principle is to educate the whole child and the school strives to provide equal access to all students. The school is able to deliver a range of stimulating learning programmes for the students it serves and teachers work and learn together in ways that go beyond the superficial. There is always a focus on improving our internal learning capacity, of having a collective responsibility for all student learning, where staff is committed to individual accountability. There is genuine collaboration as seen in routine sharing and joint work. Staff works resolutely to provide appropriate learning growth for the students in Literacy and Numeracy. Data analysis and goal setting are critical for improvement, hence time and leadership are allocated to this.

Our inquiry-based learning is gathering momentum as we prepare for candidacy for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) in April 2018 and then gain successful authorization in 2020. The aim is to create and sustain a student-centred learning environment based on the IB PYP principles, skills, attitudes and actions. The shared school-wide approach to teaching and learning of the curriculum based on inquiry and the importance of building the capacity

of teacher instructional practice drives us all. There is a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring research, innovation and creativity are core characteristics of the school.

Student leadership is promoted and student achievements recognised and acknowledged regularly. Students are given the opportunity to take leadership responsibilities within the school and community. A culture of inclusion and belonging within a culture of high expectations for all students is evident. All Year Six students are seen as school leaders.

The students have access to extensive extra-curricular activities, which include Real Life Adventures programme, Dance Ensembles Glee Club, Junior and Senior Choir, Lego Club, Debating Competitions and Public Speaking Competitions. Supervision of Before School Care is undertaken by volunteer teaching staff. After School Care is outsourced to a private organisation.

We endeavour at all times to hold true to our core values while connecting meaningfully with our students and being relevant to the world it is today. We want well- rounded students who are able to respond to challenges with optimism. We want “glass half-full” students who are confident in their own identities, know right from wrong and can join with others in celebrating our common humanity. We want students who are prepared to apply what they learn in a real-world complex and unpredictable situations. This is what we all strive to achieve in everything we do at Burwood Heights Primary School.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

### MISSION

Burwood Heights Primary School is committed to providing high-quality education, care and safety to all students, to prepare them to become active, engaged and responsible citizens of the local and global community. The school aims to prepare students to contend with a world in which creativity, cooperative work, connectedness and adaptability are key features.

### VISION

The Burwood Heights Primary School vision describes the objectives of our school community. Our 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.

### ATTITUDES

Burwood Heights Primary School believes it is vital that there is a focus on the development of personal attitudes towards people, the environment, learning and attitudes that contribute to the well-being of the individual and of the group. These attitudes are:

- **Appreciation**- We notice the beauty of people around the world
- **Confidence**- We believe in ourselves
- **Commitment**- We never give up
- **Cooperation**- We work with others
- **Creativity**- We use our imaginations
- **Curiosity**- We wonder about the world
- **Empathy**- We understand how other people feel

- **Enthusiasm**- We enjoy learning and life
- **Independence**- We think and work on our own
- **Integrity**- We tell the truth
- **Respect**- We treat others the way we want to be treated
- **Tolerance**- We know there are many kinds of people

### DET Values

Burwood Heights Primary School acknowledges and supports the Department of Education and Training's (DET) values which guide the actions we take, the decisions we make and the interactions we have with each other, children, young people and families. The DET values are:

- **Responsiveness**- We respond in a timely way with our best work
- **Integrity**- We are honest, ethical and transparent
- **Impartiality**- We behave in the best interests of the public by making fair and objective decisions
- **Accountability**- We hold ourselves and others to account for the work that we do
- **Respect**- We value others and accept their differences
- **Leadership**- We are genuine, supportive and do the right thing
- **Human Rights**- We uphold and respect the rights of others

### Child Safety

Burwood Heights Primary School is committed to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments, where all children feel valued and safe, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns are treated very seriously and consistently through our strict policies and procedures. We support and respect all children, staff, volunteers and community members.

### Education and Training Reform Act

In accordance with the principles outlined in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, as a Victorian government school, the programs of, and teaching at Burwood Heights Primary School will support and promote the principles and practices of Australian democracy including a commitment to:

- An 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

Also, in accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, the school will provide a secular education and will not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect and open to adherents of any philosophy, religion or faith.

## Implementation

This school philosophy will be central to all:

- School initiatives, policies and practices;
- Teaching and learning programs;
- Internal and external interactions;
- Organisational structures and practices; and
- Dealings with parents, the School Council and the community.

Regular evaluation processes will be in place to measure performance in all areas of the school with respect to the implementation of the vision and values of the school.

### 3. Engagement strategies

Burwood Heights 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.

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
- 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 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 and other forums including

year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. 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 plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, , Year Group Leaders, 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
  - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

#### Targeted

- 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
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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

#### 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 ChildFirst
- Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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
- running 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.

#### 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. Example 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

#### 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 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.

## 6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Example School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Example School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

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

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

## 7. Internet Access

- Our school actively supports access by students to the widest variety of information resources available, accompanied by the development of the skills necessary to filter, analyse, interpret and evaluate information encountered.



- All students and staff at our school will have censorship filtered internet and email access. All students and staff will have their own password protected internet account and log on. Such access is a privilege that infers responsibility, and not simply a right to be expected.
- The school undertakes to ensure that information published on the Internet by students or the school is of a high standard, and meets legal requirements and standards of general practice within the community in relation to copyright, safety and decency.
- Students email access will be through a class mailbox under teacher supervision.
- All email accounts will be password protected and users will be responsible for clearing their mailboxes regularly.
- Guidelines on access rights will be defined for different user levels. Restricted access shall be available to guest users for specific purposes only.
- All students shall be responsible for notifying their teacher of any inappropriate material so that access can be blocked.
- All staff shall be responsible for notifying the coordinator of any inappropriate material so that access can be blocked.
- Consequences of publishing, accessing or failing to notify the coordinator of inappropriate material shall include the removal of access rights.
- Signed parent and student consent (see acceptable use of ICT Policy) is required to be completed in order to gain access to the internet, or to publish work, photos or videos on the internet.
- Privacy of students, parents, staff and other users must be recognised and respected at all times. When identifying students, only the student's first name and last initial will be used.
- Teachers shall be responsible for making sure all work is screened for accuracy, appropriateness, grammar, spelling prior to publishing.
- Costs associated with personal internet usage will be borne by students.

## 8. 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
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## 9. 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
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21

#### REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on March, 2018 and is scheduled for review in March, 2021

*Ratified by School Council  
June, 2018*