

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Templestowe Heights  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

## 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.

Templestowe 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 linked, as one will not be successful without the other.

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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1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Templestowe Heights Primary School was established in 1973 and is situated in the eastern Suburbs of Melbourne with a current enrolment of 385 students and 16 classes. The school underwent a refurbishment that was completed in August 2012. The classrooms are designed as flexible learning spaces which open onto shared learning areas. Each level of the school has its own area in which classes and teachers work cooperatively to maximise the learning opportunities for all students. The students are organised in multi-age classes (with the exception of straight Foundation classes). The multi-age class structure along with a strong student wellbeing program ensures that the students and staff feel safe, secure and supported. A student leadership program includes all levels of the school from Foundation to year six.

The school is proud of its inclusive, multicultural community with approximately 19% of students from English as an Additional Language backgrounds. We currently have eleven students on the Program for Students with Disabilities.

The school provides a progressive and challenging curriculum that reflects the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills required to truly inspire our students to continue learning throughout their lives. The teaching staff at Templestowe Heights Primary School are expected to be active members of our learning community, working together in collaborative teams, assuming a collective responsibility for the school's vision and goals. All staff actively support all school activities and programs.

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

Templestowe Heights Primary School 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, persistence, courage and responsibility at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to provide an inclusive and collaborative learning environment for students, staff and families, that promotes high expectations for lifelong learners, embracing and contributing to local and global communities. Our mission is to provide students with high quality learning opportunities and experiences. All teaching staff have an unequivocal shared purpose of striving to make a difference (learning outcomes) to the students under their care.

The values of *Respect, Persistence, Courage* and *Responsibility* are seen as being central to the life of our school and how all members of the school community should conduct themselves. As a school we attempt to apply these in our everyday dealings with each other and in the development of our programs and policies.

Our Statement of Values on our website.

## **3. Engagement strategies**

Templestowe Heights Primary School endeavours to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for all students and to raise awareness of what makes students resilient; to develop strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and increase coping skills. Our school is a positive environment in which all teachers assume responsibility for student wellbeing, endeavouring to provide successful experiences for all children; where they feel safe and secure in a supportive environment and where a sense of belonging and wellbeing are strengthened.

Templestowe Heights Primary has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, community connectedness, 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 whole of school, targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

*Whole School*

- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- at the start of the school year all classes implement a “Start Up” program to establish positive behaviour expectations
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to fostering a positive home-school partnership
- 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 Templestowe Heights Primary use a gradual release of responsibility instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction that is evidenced-based and incorporates high yield teaching practices into all lessons
- teachers at Templestowe Heights Primary adopt a broad range of high impact teaching strategies 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
- staff participate in professional learning sessions aimed at developing understandings, skills and knowledge on strategies linked to wellness and positive behaviour
- all staff meetings (including whole staff and year level team meetings) have a specified “student wellbeing” agenda item to discuss and monitor student behaviours at a whole school level
- 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 and some policies through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and weekly Principal lunches. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- class teachers facilitate circle time sessions with targeted discussions focused on strategies to build resilience, coping skills and self-awareness
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs, buddies and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to their buddy, classroom teacher, Year Level Leader, 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:
  - *You Can Do It! program*
  - *Restorative justice chats*

- *Gratitude and growth mindset practices (Positive Education)*
- *Student leadership positions and roles of responsibility*
- *Start Up Program*
- *Circle Time*
- *Sun Smart*
- *Life Education*
- *Behaviour Management guidelines*
- *Buddy program*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, lunchtime clubs)*

### Targeted

- year level teams have a shared responsibility for monitoring the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- provide lunch time extra-curricular clubs for particular multi-age groups to foster like-interests and friendships
- students in year 5/6 support Foundation students as Foundation buddies
- Kids Hope Mentors assigned to students identified within the school that are at risk
- individualised speech program for students identified through assessment from the school's speech therapist
- targeted literacy support in small groups for students identified as working towards expected achievement levels
- targeted literacy support for students with EAL background
- enrichment support for students identified as working significantly above expected achievement levels

### Individual

Templestowe Heights Primary implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with at-risk students 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 (including Doncare), other allied health professionals, 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
- 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**

Templestowe Heights Primary is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team, teachers, education support staff and the Principal team all play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Templestowe Heights Primary utilises 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
- student behaviour logs, detention and suspension data
- support and guidance from SSSO
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- engagement from Kids Hope mentors

#### **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

- students are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participate as members of the whole school community
- 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**

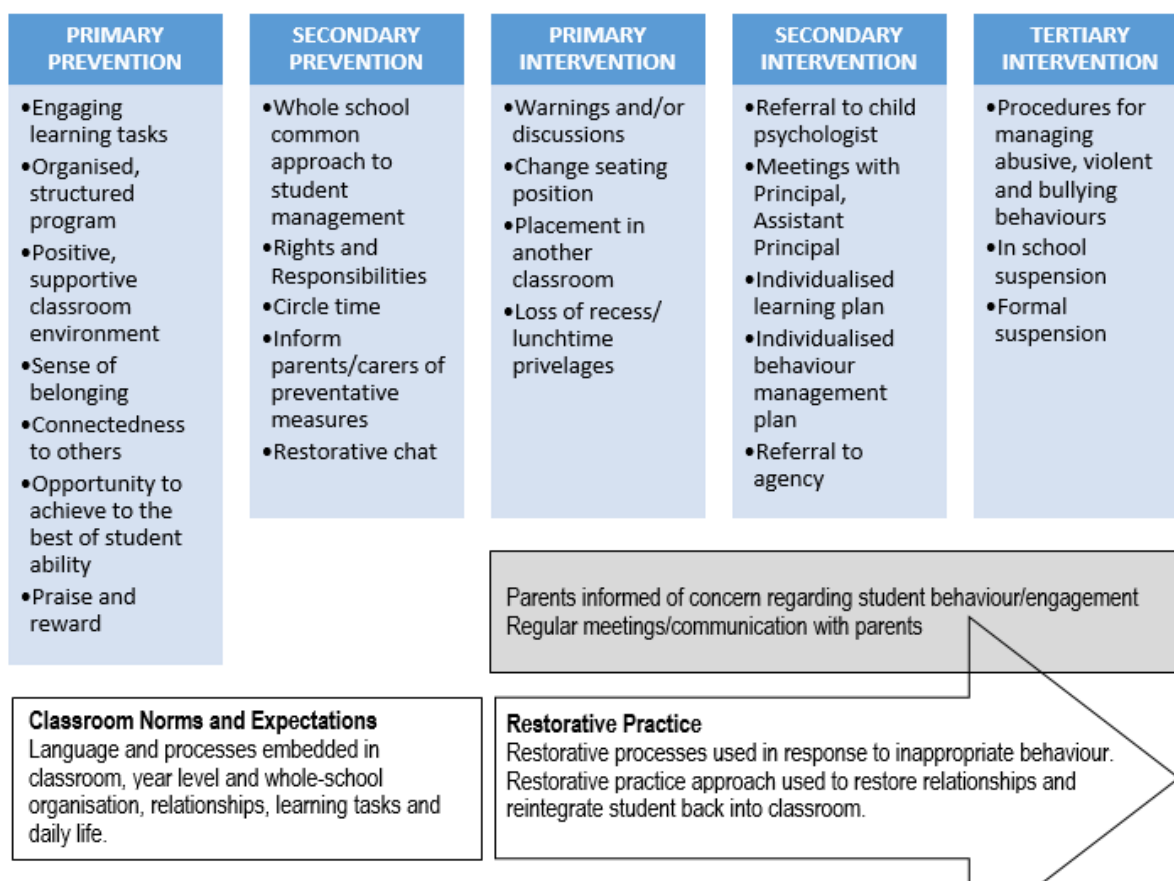
Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Templestowe Heights Primary School's Bullying policy. Behavioural expectations (and classroom rules), including the mission statement (why do we come to school?), are created within each class at the beginning of every year as part of the school's "Start Up" program.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Templestowe Heights Primary 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.

A behaviour log is kept on the school server to record incidents that have required teacher intervention. A positive approach to behaviour is desirable to foster a school climate where personal responsibility and self-discipline will be developed. Strategies to support this approach include:

- build a strong, professional relationship with students
- reward positive behaviour
- foster an attitude of mutual respect, cooperation, tolerance and understanding
- encourage students to reach their potential
- establish a set of rules and rights at a classroom level, and develop an understanding of school rules
- be consistent and fair
- develop pride in the school
- ensure supervision of children at all times.



### Primary Intervention

Intervention occurs when the teacher needs to protect the rights of others. If the teacher is a specialist, the classroom teacher must be notified of the incident and resulting action.

#### **First level consequence**

Warning, e.g. “Andrew, you are talking. This is distracting others from their learning. All students have a right to learn and this is part of our class expectations. Please stop talking as you are distracting others from their learning.”

#### **Second level consequence**

Change the seating position or a private conversation with the student where the student is informed of behaviours that they are needed to change.

#### **Third level consequence**

The student is removed to another classroom. These arrangements are to be negotiated with school leadership members. Parents/carers will be notified in person or via phone call. The incident will be recorded in the student behaviour log (found on T:Drive) and Principal team notified.

#### **Fourth level consequence**

The student may be kept in for a half of lunchtime/recess, walk with a yard duty teacher for a half of lunchtime/recess or participate in a restorative practice conference. Parents/carers and Principal team notified.

#### **Abuse and Violent Behaviour**

The student may be exited to a SIT member’s learning space/classroom without using the consequence pathway, if their behaviour poses a safety risk to themselves or others. Teachers should:

- Ensure their own safety and the safety of other students
- Despatch a responsible child to the office or phone the office to notify of the incident
- Parents/carers notified in person or via phone call.

## **Playground Behaviour Management Procedures**

### **Minor disagreements, arguments and conflict**

Where possible encourage students to discuss the issues and differences between themselves with a view to resolving problems in a fair and responsible manner. Considerations for restoring relationships after behavioural issues should be focused on building a restorative culture. Where possible, teachers are to encourage and facilitate restorative practices to equip students with problem-solving skills that will enable them to resolve minor conflict if the event occurs again. Restorative practices are to be the primary response to inappropriate behaviour.

If there is a consequence as the direct result of inappropriate behaviour, the classroom teacher must be notified of the incident and resulting action.

### **First level of Consequence**

Student to remain under the supervision of the teacher on yard duty.

### **Second level of consequence**

Removal of student from the playground. Ask the student, preferably with another student, to remove themselves from the yard and walk up to the office to talk to Principal team or school leadership member.

### **Third level of consequence**

If the student refuses to leave the playground, send a reliable student to the office for immediate assistance or staff member can phone the office to ask for a Principal or school leadership member to attend.

### **Fourth level of consequence**

As a response to regular behavioural difficulties in the playground, a student's outside playtime may be modified with shorter breaks or be restricted to a section of the playground for a period of time before playground privileges return.

### **Abusive and Violent Behaviour**

In the situation where a student becomes abusive, violent or removes themselves from the playground, the teacher on playground duty should respond in the following ways.

Immediate response:

- Ensure their own safety and the safety of other students
- Send a responsible student up to the office asking for additional support
- Notify student's classroom teacher of incident and log it on student behaviour log

Following the incident:

- Engage student in restorative practice process. The resolution part of the process must be met before the student is allowed to return to the playground.
- Appropriate consequences pathway.
- Notify parents. Meeting with parents, classroom teacher, Principal/Assistant Principal.



- Documentation of the process.

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. Engaging with families**

Templestowe 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 or by contacting the school office
- 'Magic 10' minutes allows for parents/guardians to catch up with their child's teacher before school commences
- 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 home learning 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.

## **8. Evaluation**

Templestowe Heights Primary 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
- SOCS

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

Please see the following links below to find out more information:

Statement of Values

School Philosophy

Bullying Prevention policy

Child Safe Standards

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated on *15th August 2018* and is scheduled for review in *October, 2019*.