



# Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



## Help for non-English speaker

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Sunbury Heights Primary School on 9744 3377

## 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.

Sunbury 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

Established in 1981, Sunbury Heights Primary School is located on Charter Road East in Sunbury. Our school grounds adjoin those of Sunbury Downs secondary college. The school supports a large area of Sunbury incorporating the quickly growing Ashfield and Rosenthal estates (Sunbury south). Current enrolment is approximately 460 students with enrolments expected to be maintained at this level in the immediate future. This school comprises a wide socio-economic and increasingly diverse cultural

demographic of families and students. The original School building comprises an attractive and spacious entrance where a central atrium leads off to a well-resourced library, gymnasium/multipurpose room, canteen, and staff administration area. In 2020 a designed STEAM and upgraded Art room were added to this central design. In 2005, six additional permanent classrooms were built to replace some of the existing portable classrooms. In 2015, under the BER program, six additional classrooms and two flexible learning areas were built to support the growing student population.

Sunbury Heights Primary School is an engaged learning community. Our teaching and learning program is progressive and personalised, catering to individual learning needs, encouraging and promoting active learning. We have high and achievable student expectations with student learning progress being monitored regularly, and this information used to inform teaching practice. The program of instruction focuses upon developing Literacy and Numeracy skills and closely follows that of the Victorian F-10 Curriculum and Teaching and Learning model. This includes following the 9 practice principles, the Pedagogical Model, and High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) for both teaching and wellbeing.

Our school has a well-established 1:1 computer program for all students in Year 4 to Year 6, with all students allocated their own notebook computer for learning. This program has made a significant impact on the learning/teaching in these year levels and also impacted positively on student engagement. Foundation to Year 2 students have access to banks of ipads. Each classroom has access to a large flat screen TV screen. In 2023, these screens are being upgraded to Interactive Screens. The use of ICT has been greatly enhanced through student and teacher use of collaborative programs such as Class Dojo, COMPASS, Office 365, and Google classroom.

Sunbury Heights staff comprises, 2 principal class officers, 29 classroom teachers and 19 education support staff. The school runs 19 classrooms and Specialist classes in Art, STEAM, PE, Music, LOTE – Italian. A Leading teacher of Wellbeing & Engagement and two Pedagogy Learning specialists provide school leadership, coaching, and peer observations to support the implementation of a professional learning community for staff to collaborate and work within. Our teachers work collaboratively in teams to plan a consistent curriculum and use student learning data to drive this planning. Our staff are passionate about their teaching and encourage all students to strive to achieve their best with their learning and social skills.

The school promotes a positive climate for learning via the School Wide Positive Behaviours (SWPBS) framework and House Spirit program. We also promote respect, gender equality and building healthy relationships via the Respectful Relationships initiative. In 2023 this ongoing commitment to creating a positive and safe climate for learning has been enhanced via the inclusion of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader (MHAWL) member of staff. Student voice and agency is a focus at Sunbury Heights. Student leadership opportunities include being able to be part of the Junior School Council or be elected as school captains, class captains, and house captains. The junior school council contributes to school improvement through running special events to promote social improvement and our school captains are directly involved in leading weekly whole school assemblies. Class captains are elected each term by their peers and play a significant role in assisting the class teacher and being a positive role model. Our buddy program allows older students to demonstrate their leadership by working together with a younger student.

In 2020 a shared community facility, Dulap Wilim hub was established and is situated between both school sites. This facility includes a Community Hubs Australia (CHA) hub, VCAL industrial kitchen, and a two-room kindergarten, facilitated by the Hume City Council. This provides facilities for members of the wider community to utilize as a venue for community engagement activities and the provision of community services.

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

Vision: Sunbury Heights Primary School's vision is to ensure that all students thrive socially, emotionally and intellectually. Our goal is to develop literate and numerate lifelong learners who are curious and resilient, so that they will be proactive members of our school, community and society.

Values: At Sunbury Heights we believe that every student has the right to learn and feel safe. The school strives to build a positive and inclusive climate for learning, that fosters respect and equality and incorporates our school values of kindness, respect and responsibility. We celebrate diversity, we are culturally informed and inclusive in our teaching practices and differentiated learning experiences that ensure everyone can meet their full potential. At Sunbury Heights, we are deeply committed to working in partnership with parents and the wider community. Together we are united in our common purpose of providing the best learning experiences and wellbeing practices for every child in our school community.

Our Statement of Values is available online at <https://www.sunburyheightsps.vic.edu.au/>

## **Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Sunbury 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.

### 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 Sunbury Heights Primary School use an SHPS 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 Sunbury 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 Junior School Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through Buddy Program, athletics and sports days, music programs and lunchtime clubs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Chaplain, 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:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - The Resilience Project
  - Social and Emotional Learning curriculum
  - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, lunchtime activities)
- 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 – refer to our [insert name of any other school documentation you have in place outlining the school strategies to support Koorie students] for further information
- 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 Team 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

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- Student Safety Plans
- Plan for Play
- Return to School
- One on One sessions with the School Chaplain
- Social and Emotional Targeted Learning
- Wellbeing Hub sessions

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

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

Sunbury 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 Orange Door/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
- 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.

### **3. Identifying students in need of support**

Sunbury 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

#### **4. Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

#### **5. Student behavioural expectations**

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

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. [If your school has a stand-alone bullying prevention 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, Sunbury 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
- 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 Sunbury 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.

## **6. Engaging with families**

Sunbury Heights Primary values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## **7. Evaluation**

Sunbury 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 (Compass)
- school reports
- parent survey

- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Sunbury 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
- Available on Compass
- Included in staff induction processes

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	July 18 <sup>th</sup> 2023
Consultation	School Council July 2023 School Community – ongoing consultation with the school community via an offer to provide feedback on child safety policies and procedures as outlined on our website
Approved by	Principal



Next scheduled review date	July 2025
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