



# 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.

Harrisfield P.S. 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.

This policy forms a critical component of ensuring that Harrisfield PS is a Child Safe School.

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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Harrisfield Primary School is a South Eastern suburban primary school that was established in 1955. A wide diversity of cultures, socio-economic groups and languages characterise the school community. The school has a current enrolment of 241 with more than 50% of students speaking one of more than 40 different languages at home.

Our overarching mission at Harrisfield is to provide a comprehensive program that embodies our motto, 'Linking Home and Linking School' in order to engender the value of life-long learning. In

order to cater to our highly dynamic demographic, we offer personalised learning to all students as well as a comprehensive wellbeing and support program for both students and their families. Through many years of refining our practice, we have arrived at our current model of differentiated curriculum whereby students have a home group teacher but work with different teachers and students for Reading, Writing and Mathematics according to their needs in that particular area of the curriculum. This method of personalising student learning has increased engagement and student access to the curriculum, as well as increasing the proportion of children achieving at level or beyond their year level.

All students have individual learning goals for each area of the curriculum and are cognisant of when they have achieved each goal and what specific skill they need to work on next. For each class, students have a clear understanding of the 'learning intention' and 'success criteria' and can state the importance of applying effort in order to achieve these outcomes. As a Professional Learning Community we have seen the benefits of our practice through increased student achievement, consistent growth in NAPLAN results and continuing favourable Student Attitudes to School survey results. As well as our core instruction, we offer specialist programs in Physical Education, The Arts, Science, Digital Technologies and AUSLAN.

Our whole community adheres to a set of agreed values referred to as 'ACE' (Agreement, Communication and Equity) and the respective behaviours linked to these values. Harrisfield is a school where we value the individual relationships that we foster between all members of our community, both student and family. All members of our community are genuinely valued. Having positive, respectful relationships impacts upon the way students treat one another and reduces unhelpful behaviour. All issues relating to student management or parent concerns are resolved restoratively using the guiding principles of Restorative Practices, which gives us the unique opportunity of using incidents to strengthen relationships as opposed to damaging interpersonal connections. It also gives us a degree of insight into our students' personalities and lives outside school, which promotes an increased ability to help them engage effectively with the curriculum. School values, philosophy and vision.

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

### **VISION**

Harrisfield Primary School strives to develop the personal and interpersonal skills of every student to enable them to become active participants of their global community. Our contribution to their learning journey will build the foundations for them to be innovative thinkers and life-long learners, prepared to face the challenges of an ever changing society.

### **MISSION**

To provide a secure, caring and harmonious learning environment which provides every student with the opportunity to experience success.

## **3. Engagement strategies**

Harrisfield P.S. 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.

### 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 Harrisfield P.S. use the Harrisfield 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 Harrisfield P.S. 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. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, PLC Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through productions, athletics, buddy support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Chaplain, PLC 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:
  - Restorative Practices
  - Wilson McCaskill Games- philosophies
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Anti-bully programs
  - Wellbeing programs
  - 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

Students have a wide range of opportunities to participate in school operations. These include:

- Student Council - Representatives (for all Home Groups) on Student Council are elected by the students
- School Captains selected via application and an interview of shortlisted students by a committee. The committee will have the current School Captains, the Principal and the Assistant Principal.
- House Leaders elected by the students and staff
- Leadership training for House and School Captains
- Student-led weekly assemblies
- Inter-school Sport leadership roles
- Intra-school Sport leadership roles
- Teacher-selected & voluntary monitor roles
- Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

The school maintains a fair discipline system that is based on natural justice, procedural fairness and restorative practices. Central to this system is the establishment of preventative strategies and systems in the classroom and playground. Some of these systems include peer support, JSC, social skills program, child protection and drug education.

At Harrisfield P.S. we prefer to use prevention strategies but have other strategies and programs to deal with situations as they arise. The table below outlines these. Additional programs (listed in the profile e.g. lunchtime activities) help to redirect student energies and interest in order to prevent problems arising or to cater for students who are experiencing difficulty interacting with others or making friends.

<b>Primary Prevention Responses.</b>	<b>Early Intervention Strategies.</b>	<b>Intervention Strategies.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Centre Rules &amp; Protocols</li> <li>• School-wide Rules</li> <li>• Community Ethos</li> <li>• Transition Programs</li> <li>• Welfare and Discipline Policy</li> <li>• Student Leaders</li> <li>• Leadership Training</li> <li>• School Values</li> <li>• Personalising learning and responding to individual needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Mediation</li> <li>• Playground Supervision</li> <li>• Student Council</li> <li>• Student Welfare Support</li> <li>• Social Skills Groups</li> <li>• Catastrophe Scales</li> <li>• Behaviour Management Plans</li> <li>• Life Education</li> <li>• Lunchtime activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative organisation</li> <li>• Curriculum approaches e.g. Stop, Think, Do, SIT: Stay cool, Ignore the behaviour, Tell someone you trust</li> <li>• Restorative Practices</li> </ul>

Targeted

- *each PLC team member is responsible for their learning house, to 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

- *Student Support Groups, see:*  
*<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>*
- *Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services*
- *referral to Child First, Headspace*
- *Lookout*

Harrisfield P.S. 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 (PWO/Chaplain)*
  - *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 Child First*

*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

Harrisfield P.S. is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Harrisfield P.S. 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

#### 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 with access to a Curriculum which is appropriate to individual and collective needs
- feel safe, secure and happy at school which is enhanced by an anti-bullying policy and strategies to enhance student engagement
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- Be spoken to courteously and treated with fairness and consistency
- Regular scheduled classes, equal access to teachers' time and updates and feedback on their progress
- express their ideas, feelings, concerns and possessions treated with respect.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational programs taking full advantage of learning opportunities and to allow others to do the same
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- Act honestly and show consideration for the feelings, rights thoughts and possessions of others
- respect the right of others to learn
- Co-operate with school staff and treat them courteously and with respect
- Attend classes punctually and regularly, ask for help and assistance when required
- Maintain and keep a safe, clean and attractive environment and appear neat and in clean in school uniform.

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 Harrisfield P.S.'s Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Harrisfield P.S. 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:

- participate in a Restorative Practice conference
- required to repair the harm caused
- encouraging positive behaviour
- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- withdrawal of privileges- approved by the principal
- referral to the Assistant Principal and/or Principal
- behaviour ILP
- detentions
- internal and/or external 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. Engaging with families**

Harrisfield P.S. 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
- 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

- ensuring their children are educated in a secure environment where care, courtesy and respect is encouraged and valued
- 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.

**Parents have the responsibility to:**

- To take an active interest in their children’s learning and school activities. To convey concerns and inform teachers of any circumstances which could affect the learning of their children
- To treat with respect and courtesy all other members of the school community; to promote such attitudes in their children
- To contribute to the best of their ability and to respect the contribution of other members of the school community
- To help create and maintain a safe environment and encourage their children to do the same, and to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching, learning environment
- To assist students with the establishment of goals and plans which build their confidence and competence in social relationships and academic

**8. Evaluation**

Harrisfield P.S. 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

**REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated on September 17, 2018 and is scheduled for review in 08/2019.