



# 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 Office.

## 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.

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility is dedicated to fostering responsible, resilient individuals who are well-prepared to face the challenges of the future. Our school motto, "Enthusiasm precedes success", underscores the belief that a positive, engaged attitude towards learning is the foundation for achievement. Our Successful Learner Model exemplifies that learning is a 3-way partnership to provide the best opportunity for our students to access, engage and be successful with their learning. We pride ourselves on cultivating a supportive, inclusive school community that values diversity and strives for excellence in all areas of student development.

One of our greatest strengths is our ability to cater to the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, including those with English as an Additional Language (EAL). Our student population reflects the rich multicultural diversity of the surrounding areas of Ringwood, Croydon, Bayswater, and Heathmont. While our largest ethnic group is Chin Haka, we also welcome students from a range of cultural backgrounds, including Vietnamese, Indian, Sri Lankan, and Chinese families. This diversity not only enriches our school community but also provides students with the opportunity to learn from and appreciate different cultural perspectives. Our commitment to inclusion is further demonstrated by the strong support we provide to Indigenous students and the specialized programs available through our Deaf Facility. This facility is a vital part of our school's identity, ensuring that Deaf and Hard of Hearing students can fully access, participate in and benefit from all aspects of school life.

At the core of Eastwood's teaching and learning program is a strong focus on English and Numeracy. These essential skills form the foundation of our curriculum and are further enhanced by a wide range of specialist subjects, including Visual Arts, Physical Education, Performing Arts, and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in Auslan. These subjects not only foster creativity, physical development, and cultural awareness but also ensure that students receive a well-rounded education. Our commitment to environmental sustainability is evident in our participation in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, which allows students to engage with nature and learn valuable life skills such as gardening and cooking. As a fully accredited ResourceSmart school, we also implement a range of initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability, ensuring that students develop an awareness of the importance of caring for the environment.

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility has a rich history, dating back to the 1950s, and has grown into a vibrant school community with a current enrolment of 584 students. The school offers a combination of traditional classrooms and open learning spaces, allowing for flexible teaching and learning environments that meet the needs of all students. Our facilities include dedicated Visual and Performing Arts rooms, a full-sized gymnasium, and a variety of outdoor learning areas, which provide students with ample opportunities for hands-on learning and physical activity.

Our leadership team consists of the Principal, Assistant Principals responsible for Student Wellbeing and Curriculum, and a Learning Specialist. This leadership structure ensures that the needs of all students are met, both academically and emotionally. We have eight Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), seven of which are dedicated to teaching from Prep to Year 6. Each PLC works collaboratively to provide a rigorous curriculum that is grounded in literacy and numeracy, while also catering to the individual learning styles of students. The Specialist Team delivers comprehensive programs in Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education, and LOTE (Auslan), further enhancing the breadth of the educational experience at Eastwood.

Our teaching teams represent a balance of experienced and beginning teachers, who work alongside Literacy and EAL teachers, Teachers of the Deaf (TOD), and a team of Educational Support Officers (ESOs). This collaborative approach ensures that all students receive the support they need to thrive academically and personally. Additionally, Eastwood places a strong emphasis on fostering a positive partnership between home and school, recognizing that this collaboration is essential to student success.

In conclusion, Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility is a dynamic and inclusive learning environment where diversity is celebrated, and each student is encouraged to reach their full potential. Through a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, an engaging specialist program, and a commitment to sustainability, we provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the future. By fostering strong partnerships between home and school, and through the dedication of our experienced teaching teams, Eastwood continues to create a nurturing, supportive environment that empowers students to become enthusiastic, resilient, and successful lifelong learners.

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

Our Statement of Values is available on the school website. Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility'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 listed below.

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility's vision is to provide a challenging, enriching, safe and supportive environment that develops responsible and resilient individuals.

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility's values are:

Respect, Kindness, Honesty, Resilience,

The values support the school community to work collaboratively and respectfully together for the common good and are used to reflect on the way we interact with each other. The values are also taught explicitly during regular wellbeing lessons in each class. These values also provide the whole school community with a common language supporting our Positive Education ethos.

## **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader
- three staff accredited in Mental Health First Aid
- 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, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data

Teachers at Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility use a consistent and structured approach to teaching, grounded in the gradual release of responsibility model. Across all year levels, lessons are

designed to be explicit and evidence-based, ensuring high-impact teaching strategies are embedded in every classroom. This shared instructional approach supports clarity, consistency, and the wellbeing in both Literacy and Numeracy.

- teachers at Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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 Council, Student Focus Groups and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through house events, activities and buddies
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour and wellbeing support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
  - Positive Education
  - Be You
  - SAEBRS
  - Real Schools
  - eSmart
  - Body Bright
  - Chaplaincy program
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support 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, bullying 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 Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan for further information.
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all culturally and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- led by our EAL co-ordinator, we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background.
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQA+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQA+ Student Support.

- 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
- each year level has a wellbeing focus in their weekly meetings to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and to discuss students who may need additional support
- opportunity for all Koorie students to connect 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 a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 
- 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

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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 when relevant
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example modifying the classroom set up and/or routines
- 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 Child First/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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- providing 'absence learning plans' for students with attendance issues
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for students:
  - living in Out of Home Care
  - who are funded via Disability Inclusion or Program for Students with Disability programs
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring
  - who are 12 months below or 18 months above in any academic subject.

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

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported academically, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or academic 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
- student, staff or parent referrals.
- Weekly LYarn surveys (Years 3 to 6)

#### **5. Student rights and responsibilities**

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.

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 program
- 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 rights 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 and management**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours will be managed in accordance with Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility's Bullying Prevention Policy and Student Code of Conduct General and Student Code of Conduct - Playground (refer to appendix 1).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement and Eastwood Primary and Deaf Facility's Student Code of Conduct General and Student Code of Conduct - Playground (refer to appendix 1). 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 implements 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, Assistant Principal – Wellbeing or Principal depending on severity
- restorative practices
- time outs and/or detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension (internal or external)
- 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 Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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**

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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 and be involved in school and extra-curricular 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**

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS
- IYarn student survey (3 to 6)

Eastwood Primary School and Deaf Facility 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:

- 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 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	25 June 2025
Consultation	School community offered the opportunity to provide feedback on update policy via the newsletter, Epsilon.
Approved by	Rukshana Verzijl Principal
Next scheduled review date	2027