



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.

Preston 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

Preston Primary School was established in 1875 and is located in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. It is situated amidst residential streets, close to parklands, a sporting oval and public transport, and is a focal point for the community it serves. The school has a rich and proud history within the community and has a well-established commitment to serving the families within Preston and surrounding suburbs.

Preston Primary is unique in that it is a multi-site school with 665 students and 56 staff members. Both campuses are within walking distance of each other, making it easily accessible for students, families and staff to engage with one another. Grades Prep and 1 are located at the Bowden Street campus with Grade 2 to Grade 6 students at the Tyler Street campus.

The school includes two multipurpose facilities, two library areas, a music room and two art rooms across both sites.

Grades 4-6 participate in a BYO iPad program and all year levels have iPad and laptop facilities available.

The playground includes both active and passive spaces with artificial turf playing areas and two flexible ball-sport courts. Within the school students can participate and or run lunchtime clubs such as; dancing, comic writing, board games and craft.

Our school is proud to support a multicultural and diverse community which includes families having a language background other than English (LOTE)

Preston Primary School places great emphasis on students' emotional and social well-being as well as academic outcomes and is a high performing school. We consistently perform at or above state benchmarks in all subject areas.

Preston Primary puts emphasis on straight grades; currently with an average class size of 22 students across the school. Our commitment to small classes in the Junior School promotes the best possible transition while developing a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially. We are proud of our diverse and inclusive school community.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

At Preston Primary School, we strive to sustain a culture throughout the school in which every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential in a caring and supportive environment. We provide a range of stimulating and engaging programs which highly value and enhance personal learning and wellbeing, sporting and creative development.

The values of our school community are:

Respect

Responsibility

Resilience

Learning Success

We are committed to creating an encouraging environment which promotes and supports excellence in learning, recognises and celebrates individual success, and demonstrates respect between students, staff, parents and the wider school community.

We actively promote students to take personal responsibility for their learning, social interactions, personal behaviour and belongings.

All stakeholders strive to develop skills, knowledge and confidence which promote personal resilience.

We foster positive mutual interaction so all stakeholders can show respect and honesty with each other.

Preston Primary School is passionate about education and is determined to be a school that children love to attend, where the staff is proud to work and the aspirations of parents are met. Embedded in the culture of the school is the ethos that every child should be challenged and encouraged to reach their full potential. Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. We promote diversity and tolerance, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that students with a disability are safe and can participate equally in all aspects of school life.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Preston 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 happy. 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
- Prioritising 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 Preston Primary School use a Gradual Release 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 Preston 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.
- 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 support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement.
- Monitoring 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 through the Junior School 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.
- Creating 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, 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
 - Body Bright Program
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and 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

- Each year group has a Coordinator 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
- 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 classroom program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- 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](#)
- 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 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

Preston 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

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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Preston 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. Preston Primary 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 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
- 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

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. 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, Preston 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 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
- 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.

The Principal of Preston 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.

7. Engaging with families

Preston 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.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Preston 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
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data

Preston 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 and Compass
- 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/carers 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 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	November 2024
Consultation	School community through the newsletter School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	November 2026



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9470 1167 or at preston.ps@education.vic.gov.au