White Hills Primary School

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact White Hills Primary School on 03 5443 0799 or white.hills.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

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.

White Hills 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.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

White Hills Primary School opened in Napier Street on the 1st July, 1877. One hundred and eight years later this new site in Plumridge Street was purchased and officially opened by the Minister of Education Mr Lindsay Thompson. Our schools is located adjacent the Bendigo Creek and has access to local walking and bike paths.

We have approximately 580 students enrolled from Foundation to Grade 6 and 63 staff members including a Wellbeing team.

White Hills Primary school is culturally diverse with a range of families having a language background other than English, with the largest group being Karen. Currently there are approximately 40 EAL students and 29 Koorie students. The school consist of 32 learning spaces, including 8 spaces in the BER building. The school offers multiple specialist programs including; Health and Physical Education, Music, LOTE – Chinese, Art, STEM and Intervention groups.

Our school has two large covered playgrounds and two large covers placed over one basketball court and over the artificial turf area providing shade and wet weather cover. A large sport's shed enables Physical Education classes to be held in all weather. The floor of this building has been covered with artificial turf.

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential when they are challenged, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning.

Our school strives to be a learning community where students and teachers can relate well to each other, and where different ideas and viewpoints are valued and respected.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

At White Hills Primary School we provide students with skills to be lifelong learners. We are a community which caters for academic, physical, social and emotional needs, preparing our students to contribute productively to an increasingly globalised world. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, resilience, responsible and aspire.

- **We show *Respect***
- **We display *Resilience***
- **We are *Responsible***
- **We *Aspire* to be our Best**

Website: http://www.whitehillsps.vic.edu.au/

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

White Hills Primary School 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. The teachers at this school work collectively to ensure that all students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning. This school recognises the need to be engaging and inclusive, recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning and intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs.

The school works collaboratively with students and parents/carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values and school expectations. There are also intervention strategies in place to address undesirable school behaviour.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

White Hills Primary School will implement a whole-school behaviour management approach that is evidence driven and based on pro-social values, social competencies, incentives and positive peer relationships.

At White Hills Primary School, we will:

- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management approach.
- Create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- Encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children.
- Provide a curriculum that includes pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- Promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- Support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- Establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- Provide a Wellbeing team with a focus on completing Disability Profiles to support additional learning needs
- Build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.
- Analyse and be 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
- Use a Maths and English 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
- 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
- Incorporate our School Values into our curriculum and promote students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- Carefully plan transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Acknowledge positive behaviour and student achievement 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
- Encourage students to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs, buddy programs and Multi-Age days
- Welcome students to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Group 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
- Engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
    - Mindfulness
    - National Day of Action Against Bullying
    - Multi-Age Day

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support:

White Hills Primary School has adopted the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) as a whole-school framework. The framework provides staff with an approach to promote and improve behaviour at their school. SWPBS is an evidence and data driven framework. It demonstrates the most effective ways to prevent and respond

to problem behaviour at school. Research has shown that SWPBS is successful in reducing problem behaviour, improving school culture, and increasing academic performance.

For more information on SWPBS see;
https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/improvement/Pages/swpbs.aspx

SWPBS is:

- A broad range of systemic and individualised strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviour with all students
- The redesign of environments to achieve success
- The teaching of specific behaviour expectations, not reacting to problem behaviour
- About what we do differently to teach children about appropriate social and learning behaviour
- Designing a statement of purpose, Expectation Matrix that the whole school uses to teach students about appropriate behaviour

Attendance:
White Hills Primary School will promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

- articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
- adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
- following up student absences promptly and consistently
- implementing data-driven attendance improvement strategies
- creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning
- providing early identification of, and supportive intervention for, students at risk of non-attendance
- linking with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support
- providing a staged response

Buddy Program:
The White Hills Primary School Buddy program is designed to provide support between junior and senior students. We believe that the program is an effective educational tool and can improve relationships in the school. Students from grade 5 will be paired up with a prep student. Teachers meet to organise a time to meet on a weekly basis. The Buddy program empowers students to grow in confidence and responsibility. Activities are designed to enhance communication skills, relate positively with others and build on students' self-awareness and self-esteem.

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
The *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* curriculum teaches positive relationship skills to students in primary and secondary schools. Promoting social and emotional skills and positive gender norms directly impacts students' physical and mental health, student-teacher relationships and classroom behaviour. It also reduces antisocial behaviours including engagement in gender-related violence.

Energy Breakthrough Team:
The Energy Breakthrough provides opportunities for students, teachers, parents and local community members to work together. Interested students in Grades 5 and 6 have the opportunity to be selected as part of a team to participate in the Energy Breakthrough team. The school participates in races across the region throughout the year, including the 24-hour race in Maryborough.

Student Voice:
Student voice/student participation is about valuing people and valuing the learning that results when we engage the capacities and multiple voices in the school. It focuses on realising the leadership potential inherent within all learners. There are four dimensions to student participation:

1. student involvement in school and community development
2. students as researchers and co-enquirers
3. student feedback on teaching and learning

The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change. Student participation ranges from young people sharing their opinions of problems and potential solutions in classroom forums and in focus groups associated with school strategic planning. It also includes our students sharing their 'voice' by collaborating with teachers to actually improve education outcomes, including helping to improve teaching, curriculum and teacher-student relationships and leading to changes in student assessment.

Transition Program:

At White Hills Primary School, we aim to provide a smooth and efficient transition from kindergarten to primary school and from Year 6 to secondary school. Our school appoints staff members to coordinate both our Foundation and Year 6 to Year 7 transition programs. Both coordinators communicate with both the Kindergarten and Secondary school to ensure all students successfully integrate into their new learning environment. Information evenings occur in May for new prep families, followed by an additional session in November. Children with additional needs are supported by extra transition days and meetings are organised to discuss programs and resource requirements. Transition visits will consist of familiarisation tours of the school, activities in classrooms and specialist lessons in November. For students transitioning into Secondary schools, White Hills Primary School provides an extensive program incorporating regular visits to the secondary school. Aligned with the state-wide procedure, all students participate in an Orientation Day in December for the following year's placement. Parent are informed about the school's programs, procedures, and are provided with an opportunity to ask questions and to have discussions regarding their child.

Student Support

At White Hills Primary School, we have many resources, programs and specialised staff to support students with individualised needs, allowing them to effectively access the curriculum.

Student support includes:

- Students in Out of Home Care
- Students with a disability
- Students with complex needs who require ongoing support and monitoring
- English as an Additional Language students (EAL)
- International students

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 Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for students
- providing or accessing language services (such as Language Loop) when communicating with EAL /
- International families

Targeted

Intervention Support Groups

- The curriculum programs of the school will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the school's students by:
    - accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning
    - intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs
- The school is committed to the delivery of an inclusive curriculum that ensures all our students have access to a quality education to meet their diverse needs.

English as an Additional Language students (EAL)

At White Hills Primary School, we offer substantial support for students with English as an additional language. There is a strong home-school link for families and students with these needs. To ensure participation in school- wide activities the school offers the following supports**.**

- Access to a specialised EAL teacher, Specialist Translator and Education Support Staff
- Personalised Learning Plans
- Use of the EAL continuum to monitor students' growth against the curriculum.

Koorie Education Plans

White Hills Primary School works in partnership with our local Koorie Education Support Officer to develop approaches to improve student outcomes by:

- Connecting Koorie students with a Koorie Education Support Officer
- Supporting and developing high expectations for all students
- Creating Individualised Education Plans to Koorie students
- Creating a learning environment that acknowledges, respects and values Koorie culture and identities

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/Pages/koorie.aspx#link62

International Students

White Hills Primary School has developed approaches to improve the outcomes of international student by:

- Providing intervention programs targeting key learning outcomes required by the student
- Having access to interpreter services as required

Out of Home Care (LOOKOUT Centre)

White Hills Primary School will work with LOOKOUT Centre staff to ensure all student who are in Out-of-Home-Care are fully supported and have the best available resources and opportunity to learn and succeed. All students in Out of Home Care will be:

- appointed a Learning Mentor
- provided Individual Learning Plan
- provided an SSG meetings
- referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/pages/oohc.aspx

Individual

Student Support Groups are provided for students at risk of attendance, behaviour and academically. Meetings are attended by the teacher, student (where appropriate), school principal (or delegate), parent/carers or external professional (when necessary).

The aim of a Student Support Group is:

- Collect data that will inform decision-making
- To develop or review an Individualised Learning Plan or Behaviour Support Plan
- Discuss and plan for improve student outcomes.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx

Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan

- 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

Disability Inclusion Tier 3 Funding

The Disability Inclusion Profile (profile) is a tool and process to help schools and families identify the strengths, needs and educational adjustments schools can make for the individual student.

- providing parents/carers with a learning program that best suits their child's needs
- involving students and parents in programming and planning decisions
- developing a Student Support Group
- supporting students access to programs that let them pursue achievable pathways
- ensuring the expertise of teachers working in our school is maintained and developed

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/disability-inclusion.aspx

Referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services

At White Hills Primary School we build constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances. For students dealing with unfortunate circumstances White Hills Primary School will provide services by referring students to:

- School-based wellbeing services
- Student Support Services
- Referral to appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst

4. Identifying students in need of support

White Hills Primary School will use coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. 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. White Hills 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
- monitoring of, and responding to, protracted student absences
- academic performance
- trauma management plan
- protocol for mandatory reporting
- Student Support Groups for children in need
- bullying survey of students and school environment
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- engagement with families

The school will utilise relevant external student wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- psychologist for psychological and academic assessment
- mentors – providing support for 'at risk' children
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- youth agencies
- local parent support groups
- relevant DEECD support staff
- C.A.S.A. [Centre Against Sexual Assault]
- School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)

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 and School Philosophy highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community. At White Hills Primary School we have four expectations that incorporate all behaviours: White Hills Primary School community is guided by the following values that incorporate the expected behaviours:

- We show Respect
- We display Resilience
- We act Responsible
- We Aspire to be our Best

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.

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have the right to:	***Students have the responsibility to:***
• Participate fully in their education • The right to feel safe, secure and treated with fairness and respect. • The right to express their feelings and opinions in an appropriate manner, whilst being listened to. • The right to learn and play safely without interference.	• Participate fully in their educational program • Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the community. • Listen respectfully to others. • Respect the right of others to learn • Attend class ready to learn and not interfere with the learning and play of others. • Take care of everybody's belongings.

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 and management

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. 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, White Hills 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 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
- 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:

- Suspensions Policy
- Expulsions Policy
- Restraint and 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 White Hills 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

White Hills 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- providing opportunities to enhance parenting knowledge and skills
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students

8. Evaluation

White Hills 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 via Compass
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

White Hills 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 via Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- 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 policies and resources are relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Attendance
- Behaviour - Students
- Child Safe Standards
- Expulsions
- Koorie Education
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support
- Restraint and Seclusion
- Student Engagement
- Students with Disability
- Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care
- Suspensions

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2026
Consultation	Student Leadership Group: October 2024 Student Learning and Wellbeing Teams: October 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October, 2028