

Healesville High School

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.

Healesville High 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
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POLICY

1. School profile

Healesville High School is a small secondary school uniquely positioned in the Yarra Valley, approximately 20kms northeast of Lilydale and 60kms from the Melbourne CBD. The school opened in 1962 and has a current enrolment of 350 students. The majority of students are from Healesville and the surrounding rural communities. Approximately 50% of students use bus transport to and from school. The bus network extends throughout the Yarra Valley and services Yarra Glen, Christmas Hills, Toolangi and Coldstream.

The school services the educational needs of students from a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school has a strong community focus and is proud of its history in working with the local community. Healesville prides itself as a very caring and safe school where its students can grow and mature to be confident people who are ready to make a positive contribution to society.

The school, and broader community, enjoy the exceptional facilities on offer and students are the beneficiaries of wide, open spaces and established gardens.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Healesville High School aims to provide engaging and dynamic learning experiences for all students, within a caring school community that nurtures individuals and motivates them to reach their full academic and personal potential.

The school's values of Respect, Responsibility, Teamwork and Relationships are fundamental to our core principles.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://www.healesvillehs.vic.edu.au/our-purpose-and-values>

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Healesville High School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

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

Universal

- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Teachers at Healesville High School apply a consistent 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 Healesville High School School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- 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, via social media and through contact with parents

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- 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 various student leadership groups
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and most recently, a vertical home group structure
- Students benefit from a well-resourced and targeted student wellbeing program, which includes, but is not limited to; a wellbeing coordinator, a mental health practitioner, a youth worker and various external providers, who provide targeted support
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- A home group structure that promotes connection between staff and students and also between students of different year levels
- The use of the Compass portal for recording positive and negative examples of behaviour and a system, using Compass, to acknowledge behaviour that aligns with our school values
- 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 Year Level Manager assigned to them. This person, with the support of classroom teachers, oversees the management of the students in their allocated year level
- Where possible, school camps are organised for each year level, to encourage connections and engagement
- 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. We are committed to supporting the Koorie strategy, as outlined in the Lilydale District and Yarra Valley Education Plan. We have appointed staff as the Marrung Lead and the Koorie Advocate
- 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
- 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
- All students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.
- Healesville High School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- Year 9 students have the option of participating in Farm School and a range of other electives designed to encourage engagement
- Eligible students can enrol as a student of the Talbot Room, where they receive specialised support relevant to their needs
- Student Leaders are supported by an allocated staff member and are encouraged to contribute to school decision making and to build their own leadership efficacy

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- Year 7 students are supported in their transition to Healesville High School via a variety of measures, including; visits to their primary schools when they are Grade Six students, additional transition days for students who may require them, a technology orientation session prior to the school year commencing and a welcome barbeque near the beginning of the school year

Individual

Healesville High School has the option and capacity to apply a range of strategies to support individual students, on a case-by-case arrangement. Examples of such strategies are as follows:

- 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
- Ensuring each student is allocated to a home group and support home group teachers to develop a meaningful connection with every individual
- Supporting students, where appropriate, to engage in work placement
- Developing modified timetables for students, where appropriate, to enable them to engage in services or opportunities provided externally
- 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
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator.

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- Being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- Collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- Monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- Engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- Running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Healesville High 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing.

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Healesville High School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- Personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- Attendance records
- Academic performance
- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- Attendance, detention and suspension data
- Engagement with families
- Self-referrals or referrals from peers.

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.

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 and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct. The Code of Conduct can be found in Appendix 1.

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, Healesville High 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.

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Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

The Principal of Healesville High 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

Healesville High 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.
- Involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- Involving families in school decision by encouraging parents to join our School Council
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- Seeking feedback from parent via the annual Parent Opinion Survey and also additional surveys throughout the year
- Including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

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8. Evaluation

Healesville High School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school-based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- Student survey data
- Incidents data
- Compass chronicle data
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case management
- Attendance data

Healesville High 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.

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

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COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Referred to in student meetings, as appropriate
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

REVIEW CYCLE AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2023
Consultation	Consultation occurred via the following avenues; student wellbeing meetings, student management meetings, student forums and focus groups and school council
Approved by	Principal, March 2023
Next scheduled review date	March 2025

Appendix 1

**Healesville High School Student
Code of Conduct**

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All students of Healesville High School are required to observe and abide by the following principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of one another.

All students of Healesville High School have the right to feel safe and secure in their school environment; students have the right to;

- Work in a positive environment, free from intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment
- Enjoy their educational opportunities in a supportive environment
- Fully develop their talents, interests and ambitions
- Participate fully in the school's educational program
- Choose an educational pathway free from pressure and/or harassment
- Be respected
- Feel comfortable when travelling to and from school
- Feel comfortable when asking for assistance
- Be treated fairly
- Be listened to
- Be treated equally
- Express themselves in a respectful way.

Students of Healesville High School have a responsibility to;

- Participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend ALL classes (limited exceptions will apply)
- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community
- Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including their right to learn
- Develop as an individual learner, including an increasing ability to manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources
- Seek assistance when required to ensure their own educational growth.

It is also the student's responsibility to behave with care and tolerance of others to ensure that the school is free of the following unacceptable behaviours;

- Bullying in all forms, including deliberate and/or ongoing alienation, and refusal to work with a particular person because of their background, gender or sexual orientations (including cyber-bullying)
- Discriminatory behaviour based on gender, religion, race, socio-economic status, class, age, cultural background or sexual orientation
- All forms of aggressive behaviour whether verbal or physical
- Verbal abuse including derogatory or offensive language, comments or jokes that unfairly label or stereotype characteristics of a particular group, imitating the accent or pronunciation of another person and name calling
- Refusal to listen to/impatience with another's verbal expression
- Physical violence including fighting, purposefully brushing up against another's body and unwelcomed pinching, patting, touching and embracing
- Sexist and racist attitudes
- Bringing of a weapon to school
- Sex-based harassment in all forms including: sexually provocative remarks; offensive staring and leering; suggestive questions or comments about another's sexual morality,

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physical appearance or sexual orientation; repeated requests to go out with somebody and requests after prior refusal; or requests for sexual favours

- Displays of sexually graphic material, wearing clothing, which is offensive or graffiti, which denigrates an individual or group
- Behaviour that endangers yourself or others
- Behaviour which causes damage to school property or the property of others.
- Taking food to class (exceptions may apply – ie. food based subjects)
- Using of illegal drugs (including, but not limited to alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana).

Where a student has any concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of themselves or another student they should;

- Report all inappropriate behaviour to a trusted adult and/or their Year Level Manager, Student Welfare Coordinator or to the Assistant Principal or Principal.

Students are encouraged to support their peers, by reporting all such instances to staff members.

If a student is concerned or unsure of any information contained in this document please seek advice from a trusted adult and/or your Year Level Manager, Student Welfare Coordinator or to the Assistant Principal or Principal.