



## 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.

Hesket 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

Hesket Primary School opened in 1870 and has a current enrolment of 68 students, arranged into four multi-age classes. The school is situated in Hesket, nestled between Hanging Rock and Mount Macedon. Students come from the townships of Lancefield, Romsey and Woodend, as well as many second-generation farming families from the local areas of Hesket, Rochford, Newham and Kerrie. The school plans and implements a broad curriculum that provides opportunities for students to experience success across a range of academic, artistic, sporting, social and science programs. Specialist programs include weekly Visual Art, Science, Music, PE (supported by the Sporting Schools program) and Auslan. The school is a member of the Great Southern MARC scheme – providing a Literacy-based program with a trained teacher librarian.

Students were offered the opportunity to participate in leadership and extension programs such as Kids Teaching Kids, Maths Olympiad and Tournament of Minds, alongside sporting opportunities.

Hesket prides itself in its commitment towards inclusive education and an undertaking to provide differentiated learning programs. Every student spends quality time with a teacher or Education Support Staff each day with personal and learning conversations leaving students feeling 'noticed' and that their learning is important.

The school philosophy is based on the belief that all students, given the right support, have the ability to achieve their full potential. Student Welfare has a high priority with a focus on every student and staff member having a place in our school community.

Language modelled to students often begins with, "At Hesket we..." where there is a collective expectation for interactions that all staff and students have with one another. This also extends to a general pride in the behaviour and standards that students have for the work they produce.

## 2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

### Our Vision:

Hesket Primary School's vision is to empower every student to be their best self in a safe and supportive learning environment.

### Our Mission:

For the School Community to work collaboratively to provide positive, challenging and authentic learning experiences that recognise individual learning needs and to foster independent learners who strive to reach their full potential as responsible citizens.

### Our Values:

Hesket Primary School has an agreed and shared set of values which form the basis of the school's actions to enhance its vision and mission.

At Hesket Primary we:

- **Respect** each other
- Value **Responsibility**
- Always **Try our Best**

## 3. Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Hesket 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, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the approaches we value as a whole school and individual is outlined as follows:

### *Universal*

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- maintaining a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- utilise the SeeSaw platform frequently to share learning achievements with families online
- 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 Hesket 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 and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- attendance is monitored with attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school and individual level
- maintain opportunities for multi-age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to talk to the Principal or any staff member 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 developed to address specific behaviour, as well as incursions and excursions
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment as required.

### *Targeted*

Hesket Primary School implements a range of strategies that are targeted to address particular groups of students or concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles. These can include:

- each year group has a teacher 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

- 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.

### **Individual**

Hesket Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- individual Learning Improvement Plans (ILIPS) and Behaviour Support Plans will be compiled in partnership with families who are identified as requiring extra support
- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with the student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to the following services as required:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services
  - Appropriate external support such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or Orange Door.
- referring to the links to information on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library such as:
  - [Student Support Groups](#)
  - [Individual Education Plans](#)
  - [Behaviour - Students](#)
  - [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
  - [Student Support Services](#)

## **4. Identifying Students in Need of Support**

Hesket 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Hesket 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, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers.

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
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
  - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

## **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:

- be valued and treated with respect
- participate fully in their education
- students have a right to work, learn and play in a secure environment where they are able to develop their talents, interests and ambitions without interference
- 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.

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, Heskett 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 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
- restorative practices
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension.

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 Heskett 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

Hesket 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.
- utilise the SeeSaw platform frequently to share learning achievements with families online
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

Hesket 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
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Hesket 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
- included in staff induction processes
- referenced in school newsletter periodically
- 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:** 6.3.24

**Approved by:** Principal

**Consultation:** Student, Staff and Parent

**Next Scheduled Review Date:** 6.3.26