Croydon Hills Primary School

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

Interpreter

Help for non-English speakers
If you need help to understand this policy, contact croydon.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.

Croydon 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.

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1. School profile

Croydon Hills Primary School, established in 1988, is situated in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The school offers a holistic educational experience to 738 students. 94% of students and 85% of parents were born in Australia. Ten students identify as Koorie, four are in Out of Home Care and 27 are supported by the Program for Students with a Disability (PSD).

A detailed School Profile is available on our school website at:

https://www.croydonhps.vic.edu.au/page/96/School-Profile

2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

School Values:

Integrity

- we are honest with ourselves & others
- we follow school rules and values

Care & Compassion

- we act in a kind and compassionate manner
- we consider the needs & feelings of others
- we are inclusive and supportive
- we do not accept bullying

Respect

- for self & other
- for the environment
- we respect differences in others
- we work and play cooperatively

Resilience

- we are positive
- we show empathy
- we are grateful
- we persevere

Responsibility

- we make good choices
- we take ownership of our actions
- we do our best and aim high

- we have a positive mindset
- we make sure we are safe online
- we challenge ourselves

School Philosophy and Vision

Mission Statement

To provide a child safe, inclusive, caring and dynamic environment that engages students to achieve their personal best in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. We aim to build social responsibility, resilience, perseverance and independence so students can best meet the challenges of our rapidly changing world and become ethical and responsible global and digital citizens. Croydon Hills has a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse and is committed to child safety.

We support and respect all children as well as our staff and volunteers. We want all children at this school to be safe, happy and empowered.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Croydon Hills 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 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 and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below.

Universal

TIER 1: Primary prevention: school-wide systems for all students, staff and settings including:

- our School's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum, instilled during 'The First Seven Days of School Program'.
- during the first seven days of school, staff and students will co-construct classroom behavioural agreements for individual classes, learning levels and specialist subject areas. Classroom behavioural agreements will:
  - promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships
  - include a staged response to behaviour management
- having an unwavering commitment to child safety and compliance with all Child Safe standards

- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- engaging in Positive Education philosophy and practices with our staff and students, which includes programs such as Respectful Relationships and Restorative Practices, UR Strong (Friendology) and Flourishing Classrooms.
- promoting a Growth Mindset culture, based on the belief that we are able to increase talent, ability and even intelligence through effort, curiosity, learning, and discipline
- placing a high level of importance on process praise; praise that emphasises the work, effort, or actions of a child rather than the outcome
- drawing upon the Positive Education Character Strengths we provide students with the tools to identify their personal strengths and use these to help manage and overcome problems, improve relationships, and enhance health and wellbeing.
- we co-create high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents/carers
- we co-create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and one which embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued. This includes infusing diversity concepts throughout curriculum areas and highlighting such events as Harmony Week.
- we organise and participate in whole-school anti-bullying immersion activities, including incursions,
- we welcome all parents/carers and are responsive to them as partners in learning
- we involve formal school bodies such as the School Council, Croydon Hills Association of Parents (CHAPS) and Men Of The Hills (MOTHS) in decision making
- teachers at Croydon Hills 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
- we analyse and are responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data, Compass Chronicle data and school level assessment data
- our Prep students are supported by the Year 5 Buddies program
- we have carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- we employ a Wellbeing Officer to support students, staff and parents/carers

- teachers at Croydon Hills Primary School use a consistent instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high impact teaching strategies are incorporated into all lessons
- we provide opportunities for student inclusion across a range of curricular and extra-curricular areas (i.e. Environment and Sustainability Club, Dance Club, Art Club and Sport, etc)
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council and other forums including project-based focus groups, circle time, student leadership and feedback surveys.
- students are encouraged to speak with staff. Students at Croydon Hills have more than three trusted adults that they can go to for support including:
    - their classroom teacher
    - their Specialist Subject teachers
    - the Student Wellbeing Officer
    - Education Support Staff
    - Learning Level Coordinators, Assistant Principals and the Principal
- students have places to go that support inclusion: designated calm areas such as the library, The Birches, the Student Wellbeing Officers' room and the outdoor wellbeing play space with Senior students who facilitate activities (Helping Hands)..
- Wellbeing Captains and class representatives promote student wellbeing and inclusion at whole school and year level assemblies.
- 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.
- We facilitate a range of needs based groups and activities including social skills groups, and leadership development groups.
- We arrange external organisations to visit and facilitate Wellbeing focussed topics.eg. Brainstorm Productions on Cyber Bullying etc.

Targeted

TIER 2: Secondary prevention – specialised group systems for students with at risk behaviour including:
- a designated Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing and Inclusion) and team with the responsibility of supporting all students identified as Koorie, Out of Home Care and students funded under Disability Inclusion

- designated Wellbeing Leaders and Curriculum teams (Positive Education, Respectful Relationships and Cultural Connections) with the responsibility of maintaining and enhancing student wellbeing and engagement at the school
- a designated Student Wellbeing school referral process in place for:
  - students referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
  - liaison with external agencies and supports e.g. speech pathologists, psychologists and occupational therapists
- a dedicated outdoor wellbeing space that is staffed by Education Support Staff for students that require additional support during recess and lunchtime
- student Support Programs in Literacy, Social Competencies (self-regulation, sensory regulation) which are run by our Wellbeing Officer and Learning Enhancement team
- appropriate staff professional learning pertaining to the physical and mental health needs of students, eg. first aid training, Diabetes training, Respectful Relationships and Disclosure training, anxiety awareness and trauma informed practice.
- 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 cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through our Learning Enhancement program
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through our Student Wellbeing and Inclusion program
- 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 will be 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 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

TIER 3: Tertiary prevention: Croydon Hills Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances including but not limited to Koorie, Out of Home Care and students funded under the Disability Inclusion Program
- running termly Student Support Group (SSG) meetings and providing an IEP/Behaviour and Wellbeing Support Plans (BWSP) for all Koorie, Out of Home Care and students funded under the PSD and Disability Inclusion Program
- building detailed case management folders for Koorie, Out of Home Care and students funded under the PSD and Disability Inclusion Program.
- creating Student Health Support plans for students who require medical care or assistance
- engaging appropriate support such as therapists, DFFH, The Orange Door, Anglicare, Koorie Engagement Officers (KESO), LOOKOUT and DET School Nursing.
- accurately recording and documenting student wellbeing and engagement data via Compass Chronicles to monitor individual health and wellbeing; drawing upon data to inform individual student support
- drawing upon the principles of Restorative Practices to support the meaningful repairing of relationships
- running SSG meetings and providing an IEP/BWSP for all students with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plan and/or a Student Absence Learning Plan in collaboration with the student and their family.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Croydon Hills 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. Croydon Hills Primary School utilises 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 or parents/carers

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.

Rights: Everyone has rights provided that they also accept their responsibilities to be fair and act in an appropriate way.

Students have a 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 in an appropriate manner
- be respected and treated with fairness and kindness
- privacy
- engage in the life of the school without interference from others
- expect their property will be safe
- be given assistance from others when help is required
- be an independent individual

Responsibilities: At Croydon Hills Primary School students have have the responsibility to:

- help make the school a caring, safe and happy place
- participate fully in their educational programs
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the rights of others.

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 their teacher, a trusted staff member, or a member of the school's 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 and Rights and Responsibilities.

To promote the school's values and behavioural expectations staff and students will respond with positive praise via strength spotting. The Character Strengths of students will be highlighted and utilised in the teaching and learning that occurs in our classrooms.

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 our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student's actions are not consistent with student behavioural expectations staff will institute a staged response, consistent with 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.

Following and during an event staff will work with students through the following stages:

1. Staff will provide the student with an opportunity to be heard.

2. The student will be reminded of the class agreement/school values.

3. The student will be reminded a second time of the class agreement and school values, this time accompanied with two positive choices that they could make to correct their behaviour. At this time the student may be asked to move to another physical space within the learning area to support their endeavours to make positive behavioural choices.

4. The student will be asked to work away from other students in a quiet space, breakout room, in another classroom or, if at a break, play in another area of the yard; for no longer than 40 minutes. In this instance a staff member will maintain line of sight and, with a positive predisposition, regularly check in on the student.

5. Prior to reentry to the learning space the student will engage in a restorative conversation reflecting on the impact their behaviour had on the victim(s).

6. The student will be sent to the office. The Principal Team will support a restorative conversation. Prior to the end of the day, or when practical, carers will be notified of the event by the teacher or Principal team. The notification will include details of the event, the processes that were followed and the proposed actions. This may be done via Compass Chronicle, email, phone, a communication book or in person.

7. Consequences relative to the behaviour, history of behaviour, the child's individual needs and the impact the behaviour had on other community members will be put in place. These may include:

   ○ a written or oral reflection
   ○ community service to reinforce school values
   ○ withdrawal of privileges including withdrawal from the yard
   ○ suspension, internal or external

- ○ expulsion
8. Engagement and support strategies will be put in place by the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing and Inclusion) to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed.

Notables:

- Some students may have an individual BSWP that differs from this staged response
- In the event the behaviour:
  - ○ is repeat behaviour or a clear breach of the school's values, the staff member may elevate their action to item 2 or 4 on this list depending on the severity of the behaviour.
  - ○ causes immediate harm or endangerment to another community member, staff will elevate their action to Item 6 on this list.
- At all stages the student will be given the opportunity to be heard
- Behaviour consistent with 'bullying' will be responded to in accordance with Croydon Hills Primary School's Bullying Prevention policy.
- Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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 is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on Compass/CASES21.

- Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

7. Engaging with families

Croydon 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
- communicating to parents and carers via a weekly school newsletter with school updates. The school newsletter has a page dedicated to wellbeing and features articles and strategies that promote positive wellbeing
- communicating to parents and carers via a weekly Learning Level communication with a summary of curriculum focus areas in the level for the past week, and some suggestions for activities that can be completed at home to support student learning
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, as identified in our Communicating Policy
- providing parent / carer 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 via School Council and surveys
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing IEPs and BWSPs for students.
- hosting parent forums such as Growth Mindset and eSafe.

8. Evaluation

Croydon 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:

- Compass Chronicles
- Attitudes to School Survey data
- Other level-specific student survey data
- School reports
- Parent surveys
- Case management
- CASES21 (DET administration and finance system)
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

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

REVIEW CYCLE

Consultation	- 27 January 2023 (Staff)
	- 15 February 2023 (School Council)
Ratified by School Council	- 15 February 2023
Review Date	- February 2024

Appendix 1: Restorative Practice

Our school places a high value on the development and maintenance of positive, healthy and respectful relationships and a supportive school environment. In order to achieve this we use restorative practises wherever possible.

[Department Restorative Practice information sheet](#)

Restorative Practices:

- fosters awareness in the student of how others were affected
- avoiding scolding or lecturing. This often distracts the wrong-doer from noticing other people's feelings
- Involves the student actively. They need to face and listen to those who have been affected by their inappropriate behaviour. They help decide how to repair the harm and make a commitment to this.
- Separate the deed from the doer. We can recognise a student's worth, their virtues and accomplishments whilst disapproving of their wrongdoing.
- See every instance of wrongdoing and conflict as an opportunity for learning. These can be used to build empathy and a sense of community in the hope that there will be a reduction of negative incidents in the future.

Restorative Conferences/Conversations aim to achieve:

- a sense of fairness and justice from all those who participate
- a greater insight into the impact their behaviours on others
- a healing of hurt and a repairing of damaged relationships.

The student remains a member of the school community which can continue to offer support and a sense of belonging.

Practical Example:

Restorative Conferences/Conversation

To the wrongdoer:

- What happened? Who else was there/around when it happened?
- What were you thinking, what was in your head/in your mind?
- Was it the right thing/wrong thing to do?
- Who has been affected/upset/harmed by your actions?
- In what ways?
- How has this affected you?

To the victim:

- What did you think when it happened?
- What have you thought about since?
- How has it upset/hurt/harmed you?
- What has been the worst thing?

To the wrongdoer:

- What do you need to do to make things better?

To the victim:

- What is needed to make it right/to make you feel better?
- Is that okay/do you agree?
- Is that fair?

To both:

- How can we make sure this doesn't happen again?
- Is there anything I can do to help?
- Is there anything else you would like to say?