

Preston West Primary School

Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Preston West P.S. office 03 94701546.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Preston West 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
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

Preston West Primary School is located on Murray Road Preston, in the City of Darebin. While located in a residential area, the school is in close proximity to the Preston Market and High Street shopping

precinct. The main school building is a double storey brick building that was built in 1915. A gymnasium, built in 2010 also accommodates a music room and our Before and After School Care Service. The gymnasium has a surrounding landscaped garden and dry creek riverbed. A double storey building, accommodating four classrooms was completed in 2013 and five new buildings were erected in 2016 for students in Grades 4-6. Two galleries were constructed in 2017/18 to establish the Grade 4 and Grade 5 learning communities. Preston West Primary School has a rich history of educational excellence. Serving the community for over 108 years, the school motto coined in 1915, 'Duty First', is just as important in today's setting.

Our school encourages students to strive for excellence in all their endeavours. Our core purpose is to provide an inclusive and rigorous learning environment that challenges and engages children to grow as passionate learners and citizens. The school seeks to develop motivated, creative and independent learners who demonstrate strong social values and whose leadership, resilience and self-esteem is evident when interacting with the community. The school values are L.E.A.R.N. (Leadership, Excellence, Acceptance, Respect and Never Give Up).

Preston West Primary School is a high performing school, placing significant emphasis on academic outcomes. Our achievements are consistently exceed state benchmarks in all areas. We are extremely proud of our reputation for providing a comprehensive and challenging curriculum, academic excellence, valuable friendships and catering for each individual. Preston West Primary School is committed to improving the achievements of all students. This is achieved through the provision of a challenging academic program, based on the Victorian Curriculum whilst reflecting worldwide best practice for 21st century learners. Our purpose is to provide a safe, stimulating and supportive environment that develops all students to their full potential - academically, socially and personally. We instil in students a lifelong love of learning. Our strong academic focus is supported by a multitude of extra-curricular activities and programs that provide a well-rounded education. Programs offered include Physical Education, Visual Arts, Music, Italian, STEAM, Tutoring and Intervention/Support.

Preston West Primary School is committed to embedding FISO 2.0, HITS and DET initiatives into our everyday teaching and learning. Embedding these models underpin our focus and determination to improve teacher practice and in turn provide vital and successful learning opportunities for all our students. Teaching staff are highly focused, undertaking ongoing professional development to implement best practice. This leads to achieving improved outcomes for our students through explicit Literacy and Numeracy teaching models, shared curriculum planning, coaching, Peer Observations, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and SPA (Student Performance Analyser). Staff work collaboratively in their teams to document a challenging and differentiated curriculum.

Student enrolments overall have risen dramatically over the past decade, which accounts for the significant expansion of the school's facilities. However, we are now encountering a greater stabilisation of our student enrolments – 676 students in 2024. Our predicted enrolment for 2026 is 682 students. Currently the gender break down is 47% girls and 53% boys. The proportion of students with a Language Background Other Than English is 58%. Preston West Primary School has an enrolment cap of 725 students. Based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education Index (measure of social disadvantage of a school), the socio economic status of the student cohort is in the low range.

Our school has 43 equivalent full time teaching staff, 3 Principal Class and 14 non-teaching staff. The Management Team consists of the Principal, Assistant Principals, Leading Teacher and five Learning Specialists. A Health and Wellbeing Coordinator has been appointed since 2023. The School Improvement Leadership Team (SILT) comprises of members of the Management Team and year level

coordinators. The Consultation Committee includes representation from each teaching team. The results generated from the Staff Opinion Survey 'School Climate' section since 2016, show Preston West Primary School staff significantly above the state median for overall satisfaction with 86.0% positive responses in 2024. Preston West Primary School is a strong advocate of the Child Safety Guidelines. Everyone working at our school is responsible for the care and protection of the children and reporting information as per Department of Education and Training guidelines.

Straight grades have operated across the school since 2014. In 2024 we had 29 grades (5 Preps and 4 grades at all other year levels). In 2024, the 29 classroom teachers were supported by nine specialist/support teachers. Our journey to ensure we are promoting the very best educational opportunities for all our students continues. Building on the rich history, we continue to work collaboratively with families, to create citizens that add great value to the Preston West community and beyond.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

VISION

Preston West Primary School is committed to providing a learning environment and educational programs that will motivate, challenge and support students to become lifelong learners. The school aims to maximise student potential in a safe and caring community in which academic achievement, positive self-esteem, cultural diversity, wellbeing and the rights of all are highly valued and respected.

MISSION

Preston West Primary School's mission is to provide a safe, stimulating and supporting learning environment that develops all students to their full potential – academically, socially and personally. We instil in children a lifelong love of learning.

OBJECTIVE

Our school's objectives are considered as part of the 4 yearly strategic planning process and reflected in the goals listed in our current School Strategic Plan (SSP). We also develop an Annual Implementation Plan to operationalise the goals and key improvement strategies contained in our SSP.

VALUES

Preston West Primary School we actively foster a culture that supports our school community. Our values are LEARN (Leadership, Excellence, Acceptance and Never Give Up).

Leadership: in our actions and behaviour. As exemplary leaders we demonstrate responsibility, fairness, kindness, honesty, loyalty and cooperation with other students, teachers and parents within our school environment and in our community.

Excellence: in our learning and interactions with other people. We strive to achieve high expectations in our daily learning endeavours and celebrate our successes. We demonstrate fair play and encourage the achievements of others.

Acceptance: of others. We understand and celebrate the array of abilities, backgrounds, beliefs and opinions of other people. We value our rich multicultural community and acknowledge our diversity is our strength.

Respect: for ourselves, other students, teachers, our parents, the wider community and our environment. We value and acknowledge every person as an individual who deserves to be treated

with appreciation and dignity. We respect the work, ideas and belongings of others.

Never Give Up: on ourselves or others. We demonstrate persistence and resilience in the pursuits of higher learning and to become well rounded individuals socially and emotionally. We also show support, helpfulness and care for others and to assist them in the attainment of their goals.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Preston West Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and happy. *We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.* A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *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*
- teachers at Preston West Primary School use an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Preston West Primary 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
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs 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 and communication to parents
- 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 the Junior School Council and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students

- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Year level Coordinators, 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
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs e.g. Respectful Relationships
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion eg sports teams, lunchtime clubs
- buddy programs
- *measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.*

Targeted

- Each year group has a Coordinator responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan for further information
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our classroom program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- We provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Student Support
 - All students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
 - Students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
 - Wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
 - Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
 - Students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: International Student Program

Individual

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

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
 - 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

4. Identifying students in need of support

Preston West Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Example 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. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/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, Example School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as 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>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education.

The Principal of Preston West Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

Preston West 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 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

Preston West 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

Preston West 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 on Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in an annual reference in the schools 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 of Education policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ 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	May 1 st 2025
Consultation	School council May 6 th 2025 Staff May 5 th 2025 School community May 15 th 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2027