

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Endeavour Hills Specialist School on 9113 4100

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.

Endeavour Hills Specialist 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 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. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports
 - a. Functional Behaviour Analysis
 - b. Cycle of Escalation
 - c. Staged Response
 - d. Staff response to critical problem behaviours
8. EMERGENCY SITUATION
9. Engaging with families
10. Evaluation

POLICY

School profile

Endeavour Hills Specialist School provides highly individualised programs of learning for students with disability and high needs who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder with a language disorder and/or an intellectual disability. The school welcomes students from 5 to 18 years of age.

School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with a comprehensive learning program and access to support networks. It also helps to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and active participation in their local community.

The school is located in Amalfi Drive, Endeavour Hills.

The Designated Transport Area covers large sections of the City of Casey, with distinct zones for each category of disability. The DET provides a bus service for students living within the transport zones designated by DET.

Endeavour Hills Specialist School provides a stimulating, safe and challenging learning environment where student achievement is acknowledged and celebrated.

The School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports framework incorporates a matrix of expected behaviours in every area of the school which are explicitly taught. Staff training includes Team Teach and Restorative Practices to ensure that students are treated with respect and compassion.

The school responds to the needs and expectations of parents and the community by providing learning programs that aim to assist students to reach their full potential, extending and supporting them to become effective and productive members of their community.

The curriculum and extracurricular programs provide learning in an environment that is appropriately challenging, engaging and motivating. Individual Learning Programs - developed by teachers in consultation with parents and specialists - focus on developing personal growth for each student. The school has a strong commitment to student wellbeing. Pathways and transitions are a strong consideration of all school programs. The school values parent input and works closely with families to ensure the required supports are available both at school and at home.

School values, philosophy and vision

The vision of the Endeavour Hills Specialist School's community is to inspire students to achieve their personal best and become active and independent members of their community.

Our mission is to provide a blended curriculum of academic learning, high-interest programs and therapeutic supports within a positive behaviours framework that will cater for each student at their point of need and encourage personal growth, independent learning, and sound social-emotional behaviours.

The objective is to produce lifelong learners who are aware of their skills and strengths and have a positive attitude to challenges and opportunities.

Engagement strategies

Endeavour Hills Specialist 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.

As a whole school, we will implement strategies and programs to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours, including:

- School-wide Positive Behaviour Supports (S-WPBS) which aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all school community members.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for each student.
- Student Support Group meetings at least twice a year, with further meetings available on request.
- Values influence the development of the Expectations Matrix and are embedded in school language and activities.

- Ongoing staff professional development on welfare issues, mental health issues, and student engagement and support.
- Specialist training and refreshers for all staff in School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports, Restorative Practices and Team Teach.
- delivering an engaging and diverse curriculum to ensure that students are able to participate in subjects and programs that are structured to their interests, strengths and aspirations.
- creating learning opportunities within a model of explicit teaching and based on an agreed shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- utilising an agreed range of teaching and assessment practices to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of students.
- following the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- embedding the Statement of Values into the curriculum by explicitly teaching and modelling to ensure shared expectations and understanding of the values within the school community.
- providing students with the opportunity to be involved in making decisions about their school through the Student Representative Council and other activities. Students are encouraged to speak with their teachers, Health and Wellbeing staff, Assistant Principal or Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- creating opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through whole-school events such as House activities, music, sport and lunchtime programs.
- explicitly teaching health and social skills development as a key component of the curriculum.
- Positive learning programs, such as the Five Finger Rule and You Can Do It.
- encouraging self-referrals from students to the Health and Wellbeing Group, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.
- explicitly teaching positive behaviour programs, including:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- presenting programs, incursions and excursions that address issue-specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs).
- offering student support activities and programs including buddy and peer support programs.

Targeted

Endeavour Hills Specialist School acknowledge that our 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. These can include:

- allocating a Health and Wellbeing Leader in each learning neighbourhood to be responsible for ensuring the health and wellbeing of each student is monitored and supported as needed.
- assisting all students in their final two years of schooling are assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.
- connecting all indigenous students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer.
- appointing a Learning Mentor for each student in Out of Home Care.
- applying a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma.

Individual

Endeavour Hills Specialist School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building strong relationships with students who are at risk or otherwise vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.

- meeting with the student and/or their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school.
- developing a Behaviour Support Plan.
- considering environmental changes that may assist the student.
- referring the student or parents/carers to:
 - the Health and Wellbeing Leader
 - Student Support Services
 - therapeutic intervention and 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 parents/carers to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and/or health and wellbeing.
- collaborating, with the support of the student and their parents/carers, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student.
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plan in collaboration with the student and their parents/carers.
- conducting additional Student Support Group meetings as needed to ensure collaboration with parents/carers, external service providers, and other services as deemed appropriate.

Students in need of additional support

In order to support the complex needs of the students at Endeavour Hills Specialist School, the Health and Wellbeing group provides supports at three levels:

- School wide processes – the Health and Wellbeing Leader coordinates support staff and delegates roles and responsibilities for health and wellbeing processes.
- Learning neighbourhood – the Team Leader of each learning neighbourhood coordinates and delegates health and wellbeing processes for individual students.
- Specialist supports – the Team Leader of specialist staff coordinates and delegates roles and responsibilities for therapeutic intervention and services.

The Endeavour Hills Specialist School Health and Wellbeing Team meet on a regular basis to discuss students' needs. The Principal holds a daily briefing that provides an opportunity to update staff on changes to student plans.

Endeavour Hills Specialist School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students who may require additional support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled.
- attendance records.
- academic performance
- changes in health, engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness or motivation.
- data on attendance, suspension, positive and/or negative incidents.
- engagement with parents/carers.
- referral to Health and Wellbeing Group from staff.
- self-referral or referral from peers.

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/carers and visitors treat each other with respect and dignity. Our Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

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

Students have the responsibility to:

- be kind to themselves, others and the environment.
- participate fully in their learning.
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate the school's values.
- 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 classroom teacher or other staff member and their parents/carers.

Student behavioural expectations and management

The Statement of Values details the behavioural expectations for students, staff, parents/carers and visitors. The matrix of expected behaviours in every area of the school explicitly identifies ways in which everyone is expected to conduct themselves. Students learn ways in which they can enact the school values through explicit teaching and related activities.

Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Endeavour Hills Specialist School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Endeavour Hills Specialist 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 responsive action taken by staff.

Staff at Endeavour Hills Specialist School are trained in the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports framework and regularly discuss, devise and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to influence positive student behaviour. Disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class, are considered the 'last resort' for an in-school response, and are implemented after consultation with the Health and Wellbeing Group.

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports

School-wide Positive Behaviour Supports (S-WPBS) is an evidence-based framework for preventing and responding to student behaviour. It aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all school community members.

We are committed to implementing the S-WPBS approach to the teaching and management of student behaviour. This means that we use:

- DATA to track progress and identify areas for intervention;
- Expectations Matrix, which outlines EXPECTATIONS and VALUES in specific settings, to explicitly teach appropriate behaviour;
- POSITIVE INCENTIVE programs to encourage appropriate behaviour;
- EFFECTIVE CONSEQUENCES to discourage inappropriate behaviour.

A team oversees the various S-WPBS activities within classrooms and across the school. Ideas are discussed and shared with all staff in staff meeting and on the intranet on a dedicated page.

There are three tiers of behaviour and support identified in S-WPBS:

- ***Tier 1: A positive school climate***
At tier 1, expected behaviours are taught systematically and explicitly through:
 - developing a safe environment;
 - using positive reinforcement;
 - creating predictable structures and routines;
 - practising skills in functional situations;
 - providing choices and celebrating achievement.

- **Tier 2: Minor, persistent infractions of expected behaviours that interfere with learning of self and others**
At tier 2, in addition to tier 1 strategies, interventions may include:
 - a “quick” Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA);
 - systematic and targeted use of a positive reinforcement system;
 - sensory analysis/breaks;
 - more time spent on preferred activities to provide opportunities for success.
 These interventions are developed by the class staff, supported by the Health and Wellbeing Group. A Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is developed, or the existing plan is reviewed. A Safety Plan may be developed if needed.

- **Tier 3: Persistent challenging behaviours that endanger self and others**
At tier 3, interventions are developed and implemented with the support of the Health and Wellbeing Group, in conjunction with other staff and parents as appropriate. The Safety Plan is reviewed and modified as needed.
The BSP is reviewed and modified as required. A full Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA) may be conducted and signed off by the parents/carers, class teacher and Principal. In addition to Tier 1 and 2 strategies, an individualised timetable is developed and additional 1:1 support provided.

Students who exhibit Tier 2 and 3 behaviours require a formal Behaviour Support Plan. This plan is written in consultation with the student’s parent/s, teacher, psychologist and relevant therapists through a Student Support Group meeting (SSG).

Functional Behaviour Analysis

A Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA) must be completed in order to determine the triggers and functions of particular behaviours.

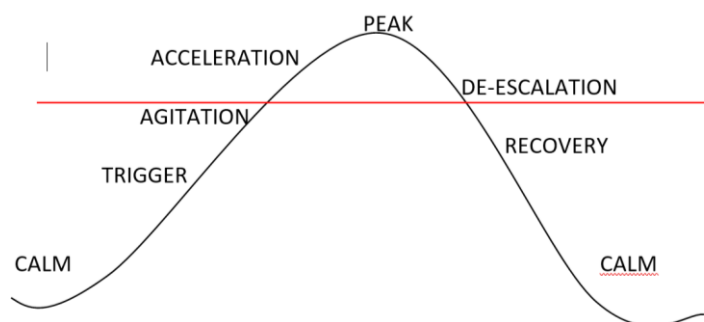
FBA is a systematic, evidence-based process for assessing the relationship between a behaviour and the context in which that behaviour occurs. A primary goal of FBA is to guide the development of effective positive interventions based on the function of the behaviour (e.g., tangible, escape, attention, automatic). Interventions based on an FBA result in significant change in student behaviour. FBA is critical to the design and successful implementation of positive behavioural interventions.

At Tier 2, FBA involves simple and realistic team-driven assessment and intervention strategies aimed at students with mild to moderate behavioural issues.

At Tier 3, FBA is considered a complex and rigorous process focused on students with more chronic, intensive behaviour issues for whom primary and secondary level interventions were unsuccessful. Students who exhibit serious problem behaviours in school (about 5% of school population) require an extensive FBA process led by an individual well-versed in behavioural principles (such as a psychologist or speech pathologist).

Cycle of Escalation

Behaviours and actions observed are categorised into the cycle of escalation. This cycle is not always linear, and students can cycle through different stages depending on their current state.



Staged Response

Students with challenging behaviours or ongoing absenteeism will be responded to through a staged response.

Some students who are at risk for disengagement from their learning, require evidence based targeted interventions that are monitored regularly to assist them to improve their wellbeing and educational performance. These students are best supported in calm, consistent and predictable school classrooms and environment that understand and recognise their individual needs and provide evidence-based support.

Staged response documentation is updated regularly by staff with relevant information, after parent contact and to document current student behaviour.

Staff response to critical problem behaviours

It is important that all staff have a consistent understanding of how to respond to emergency situations or critical incidents involving severe problem behaviour. This consistency ensures that appropriate actions are taken to ensure that both students and staff are kept safe.

An emergency situation or critical incident is defined as an occurrence that is sudden, urgent and usually unexpected, or an occasion requiring immediate action. Severe problem behaviour is defined as behaviour of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the student or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy.

EMERGENCY SITUATION

A whole-school announcement may assist with the provision of prompt action in an emergency situation. When making a whole school announcement staff should request assistance and state the location of the incident in a calm manner.

The term **Code BLACK** refers to a lock-down, during which time students and staff are to go indoors and keep students in their room. During a code black, senior staff that are available will attend the incident. Duties during this time may involve the supervision of the other students, or physical assistance to the staff involved with the incident. In this case please follow the direction of the staff in charge with the particular student or event.

The following language should be used to help identify the status of the situation:

"It's fine, I've got it" – there are too many people present. Leave the area.

"Stay near" – stay in the vicinity and watch ready to step in if needed.

If supporting staff wish to assist, the Team Teach script should be used to determine the need:

"Help is available"

"Do you require more help?"

"Mr A, more help is available"

Basic defusing strategies should be employed. These actions will assist in reducing anxiety and de-escalating the student's dysregulation:

- **Avoid escalating the problem behaviour**
Avoid shouting, cornering the student, moving into the student's space, touching or grabbing the student, sudden responses, sarcasm, becoming defensive, communicating anger and frustration through body language.
- **Maintain calmness, respect and detachment**
Model the behaviour you want students to adopt, stay calm and controlled, use a serious measured tone, choose your language carefully, avoid humiliating the student, be matter-of-fact and avoid responding emotionally.
- **Approach the student in a non-threatening manner**
Move slowly and deliberately toward the problem situation, speak privately to the student/s where possible, speak calmly and respectfully, minimise body language, keep a reasonable distance, establish eye level position, be brief, stay with the agenda, acknowledge cooperation, withdraw if the situation escalates.
- **Follow through**
If the student starts displaying the appropriate behaviour, briefly acknowledge their choice and re-direct other students' attention towards their usual work/activity. If the student continues with the problem behaviour, then remind him/her of the expected school behaviour and identify consequences of continued unacceptable behaviour.
- **Debrief**
Help the student to identify the sequence of events that led to the unacceptable behaviour, pinpoint decision moments during the sequence of events, evaluate decisions made and identify acceptable decision options for future situations.

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 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 Health and Wellbeing Leader.
- restorative practices.
- in-school detention.
- 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 and Training.

The Principal of Endeavour Hills Specialist School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

Engaging with families

Endeavour Hills Specialist School values the input of parents/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/carers by:

- including parents/carers in Student Support Groups, communicating regularly and developing individual plans for student learning, behaviour and safety as needed.
- ensuring that all parents/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, by making them available on our school website or in hard copy on request.
- maintaining an open and respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, as defined in our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parents/carers with volunteer opportunities to assist their contribution to school activities.
- involving parents/carers with curriculum-related activities.
- involving parents/carers in school decision making.
- coordinating community resources and services for parents/carers on request.

Evaluation

Endeavour Hills Specialist School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by students to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and to identify emerging trends or needs.

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

- Student Support Group feedback.
- student survey data.
- incident data.
- school reports.
- parent survey.
- case management.
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data.
- SOCS.

Endeavour Hills Specialist 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:

- publicly available on the school's website.
- included in staff induction processes.
- included in enrolment packs.
- included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents/carers and students.
- included as annual reference in the school newsletter.
- made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also follow 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

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2025