



# Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy 2018

## 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.

Big Hill PS 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.

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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Big Hill Primary School is situated on the Calder Highway on the southern fringe of Bendigo. A new school building was built in 1997. The school has attractive surrounds including an adjoining flora and fauna reserve and is committed to sustainable practices in regard to water and energy use. The school draws its population from both rural and urban areas and has a mix of socio-economic backgrounds. Our school's Student Family Occupation Index is 0.46. Our 291 students are at the centre of our learning community and the decisions we make. Projected enrolments indicate that our student population will steadily increase over the next four years.

The school has 19.74 equivalent full-time staff: 2 Principal class school leaders, 14 teachers and 3.34 Education Support Staff, plus 0.4 school chaplain.



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Our school structure is founded on “unit thinking” every teacher within a unit has a responsibility to every learner and each other. We have 4 units across the school – Our First Steps Unit incorporates Years Prep/ Grade 1; our Junior Unit is currently made up of 3 Year 1/2 classrooms; our Middle Unit is currently made up of 3 Year 3/4 composite classes; and our Senior Unit incorporates the Year 4/5/6 classes.

Teachers within our school interact and collaborate to ensure each student has the best opportunity to reach their potential. Professional Learning Teams meet regularly to focus on approaches in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy, Wellbeing, Phys. Ed and ICT. This work initiates and drives best practice thinking and translates into action across the school. Ongoing professional learning is a key school priority and is actioned through Teacher Observations, coaching and external professional development in key focus areas – currently reading and mathematics.

A culture of high expectations and persistence has resulted in many significant competition achievements at Big Hill also, with many of our students standing out in the local Greater Bendigo area.

The school has a commitment to developing personalised pathways for students identified as having special learning or behaviour needs. The Wellbeing Team, led by the Assistant Principal manages a growing number of students with diverse and complex needs to ensure assessments, supports, associated skilled professionals and parents all have the opportunity to work together to maximise learning outcomes.

Our school recognises the importance of student health and wellbeing and is reviewing and developing explicit wellbeing protocols and procedures to help to support and grow resilience and relationship skills in every learner enabling them to thrive socially and emotionally. Using the School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports Framework we have reviewed our school values and have developed actions and standards of positive behaviour. The purpose of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support is to establish a school climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students.

We are proud of our community and our students. We openly and actively celebrate our achievements and the achievements of our students via our weekly school community assemblies, our newsletter, website, Facebook page and local media. Monday school assemblies showcase weekly highlights under the leadership of an outstanding student Assembly Team. This school program continues to be a favourite with parents, students and staff!

A comprehensive range of incursions, excursions and camps takes learning beyond the walls of the classroom.

A supportive and hard -working School Council Team values the ongoing collaboration between parents and staff. A small and very active Parent Cub supports our school community in celebrating special days and events. Their fundraising efforts are acknowledged and appreciated. We know our community well and we embrace our community to ensure every member has every opportunity to thrive!

### **2. Democratic Principles:**



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Big Hill Primary School supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian Democracy:

- Elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion; and
- Freedom of speech and association
- The values of openness and tolerance

### 3. School values, philosophy and vision

At Big Hill PS Our school's vision is to provide every child the opportunity to be the best they can be in a safe, respectful, caring environment. We encourage responsibility and a confident contribution to a supportive positive community.

Big Hill Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, responsibility and safety at every opportunity.

VALUE	MEANING	BEHAVIOURS What does it look like?
Be RESPECTFUL	Respect means... Listening to and accepting the views and actions of others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Looking after things</li> <li>- Being nice to others</li> <li>- Looking after ourselves.</li> <li>- Accepting differences in others.</li> <li>- Being friendly and positive to others.</li> <li>- Being honest to yourself and to others.</li> </ul>
Be RESPONSIBLE	Responsibility means... Staying in control of your behaviour and actions. Being the best that you can be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taking care of belongings.</li> <li>- Taking care of our environment.</li> <li>- Behaving well.</li> <li>- Completing tasks without being asked – eg; change reader, finish work on time.</li> <li>- Completing all tasks to the best of your ability.</li> <li>- Do the right thing.</li> <li>- Including others in play.</li> <li>- Sharing with others.</li> </ul>
Be SAFE	Safe means... Looking after ourselves and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Looking after others.</li> <li>- Being positive and staying healthy.</li> </ul>

### 4. Engagement strategies



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Big Hill 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 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
- 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 Big Hill Primary School use The High Impact Teaching Strategies (10 instructional practices that reliably increase student learning wherever they are applied) 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 BHPS 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
- 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 Student Voice. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through buddies, school plays, athletic and music programs.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as Respectful Relationships and Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. bullying)

### Targeted

- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer



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- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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 (e.g. Dental health Checks )
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

### Individual

- Student Support Groups, see:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator, Chaplin and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Lookout

BHPS 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

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
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - with a disability



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- in Out of Home Care
- and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

### 5. Identifying students in need of support

BHPS 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. BHPS 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

### 6. 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.

#### **All students, staff and parents have the right to:**

Be treated with courtesy, kindness and respect, regardless of gender, ability, cultural background or religion

Express feelings and opinions respectfully

Work and play in an atmosphere of harmony and co-operation

Expect that the school values and policies will be implemented consistently and fairly

Be valued as an individual

Learn in a supportive atmosphere

#### **All students, staff and parents have the responsibility to:**

Treat others with courtesy, kindness and respect.

Actively listen to others.

Maintain a safe and secure school environment.

Model and support school and classroom values and policies.

Develop and take responsibility for their own actions.

Value others, for their individual differences and similarities.

Work to achieve their personal best whilst allowing others to do the same.

Not take part in bullying behaviour.

Report incidents of bullying to the most appropriate person (peer mediator, yard duty teacher, classroom teacher or senior staff member).

Understand and not tolerate the participatory role of bystanders.

Understand and adhere to the Positive Behaviour Program.



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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.

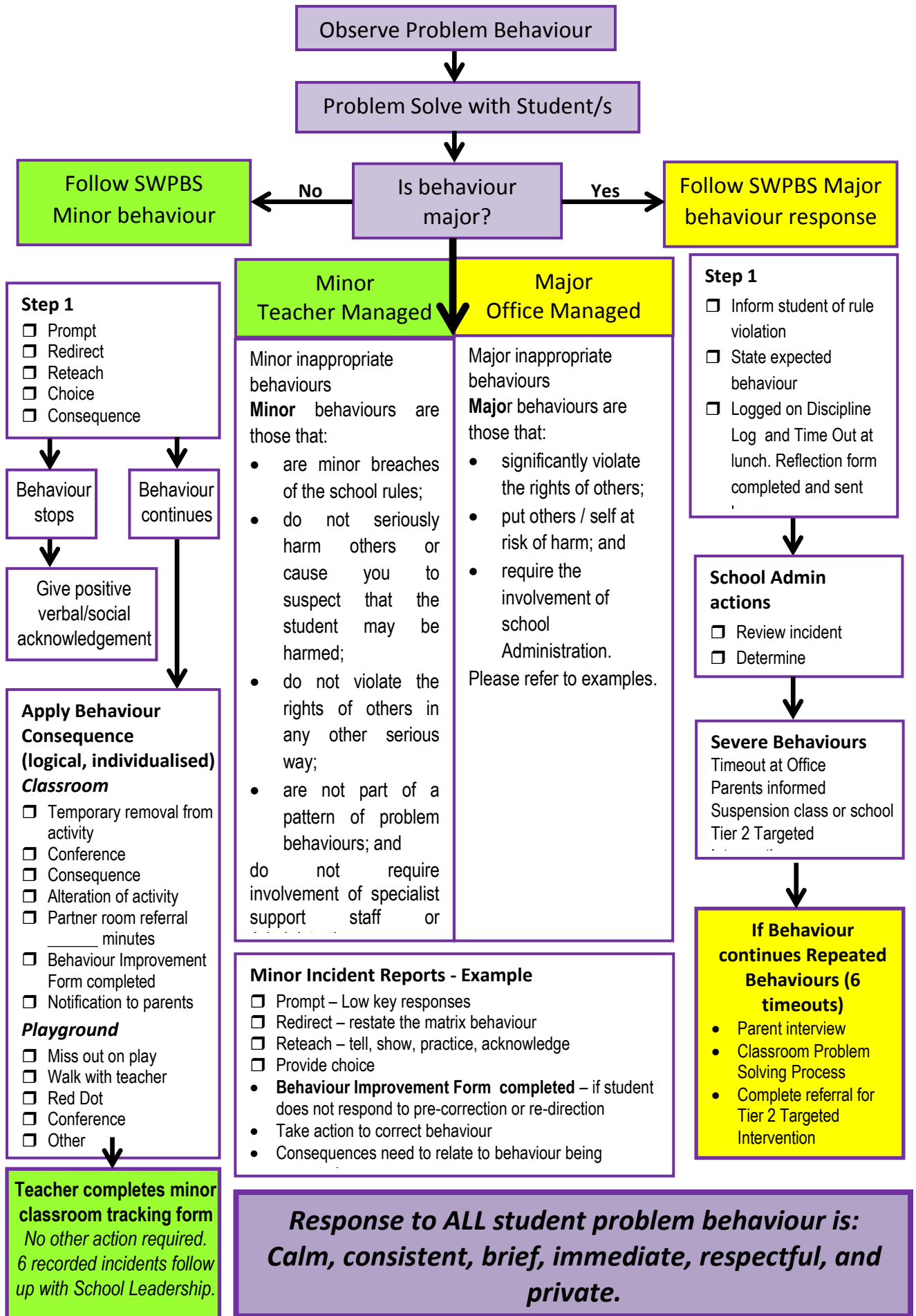
### **7. Student behavioural expectations**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Example School's Bullying 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 Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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.

### **BHPS Behaviour Management Flowchart**







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Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

### **8. Engaging with families**

Big Hill 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
- 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.

### **9. Enactment of School Philosophy**

In all documents, in all practice by students and teachers, in work with the School Council and the community, in all teaching and learning programs, in all school initiatives, in all internal and external interactions, in all organisational structures and practices the vision of the school will sit at the center and there will be expectations about all work aligning with the school vision. Regular evaluation processes will be in place to measure performance in all areas of the school with respect to the implementation of the vision and values of the school.

### **10. Evaluation**

Big Hill 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
- SOCS

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**



# Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy 2018

Philosophy, Bullying Prevention

Child Safe Standards

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated March 2018 and is scheduled for review in March 2019.