



Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

PURPOSE

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

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

Northcote High 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 and sites, including camps, excursions and online environments.

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
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

The school is committed to work positively and progressively with its community – students, staff and families to ensure that home/school communication and collaboration are maximised to provide the best possible opportunities and outcomes for students.



2. School values, philosophy and vision

VISION AND VALUES – IN ACTION

Northcote High equips young people to realise and enhance their talents. We know that learning is for us all. We are a community whose positive relationships allow us to challenge ourselves and each other. The paths we each follow will take us out into the world changed and confident.

That’s why we value Achievement, Curiosity, Humanity and Fairness.

	AS A TEACHER...	AS A STUDENT...
<p>ACHIEVEMENT We challenge ourselves. We are passionate about and take responsibility for our learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I believe that all students can learn and should be challenged ▪ I connect learning to student interests, experiences & strengths ▪ I provide clear learning intentions for every lesson and opportunity to review and reflect ▪ I use data to reflect, plan and understand my students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I collaborate and learn from others through feedback ▪ I engage in tasks positively and can direct my own learning ▪ I come to class on time, organised and ready to learn ▪ I persist to achieve my learning goals
<p>CURIOSITY We challenge ourselves. We are passionate about and take responsibility for our learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I am open to innovation and integrating new ideas ▪ I promote creative and imaginative solutions to problems ▪ I encourage students to ask questions and develop new ideas ▪ I plan learning that provides opportunities for student choice and independent learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I ask questions and remain open to new learning ▪ I reflect on my learning to seek development ▪ I challenge my existing ideas
<p>HUMANITY We learn in and with our community. We are generous and strive for justice in the world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I learn with my colleagues and students, embracing opportunities to collaborate with others ▪ I am accepting of others and celebrate diversity in our community ▪ I take responsibility for implementing shared understandings, eg. implementing school rules consistently ▪ I demonstrate leadership and create a caring learning environment for students and peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I embrace diversity in my community and connect with others ▪ I take appropriate action when I see someone in need ▪ I demonstrate leadership and act as a role model for others ▪ I care for our classrooms and common spaces
<p>FAIRNESS We are open and honest. We treat each other with respect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I build positive relationships with students, colleagues and families ▪ I share knowledge and resources with others ▪ I am consistent & fair, treating everyone with dignity & respect ▪ I connect feedback to data and provide direction on how to improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I listen to others and communicate my ideas respectfully ▪ I recognise the work of others and encourage them in their learning



3. Engagement strategies

Northcote High School has 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

- The explicit teaching of pro-social skills through the adoption of Philosophy for Children that includes respecting opinions, critical and reflective evaluation, listening skills and turn-taking.
- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising 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
- delivering a broad curriculum
- teachers at Northcote High 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 Northcote High 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
- carefully planning transition programs and a developmentally appropriate staging of phases of learning 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
- monitoring student attendance and implementing 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 advisory and leadership forums and in regular ongoing feedback to staff. Students are also encouraged to speak with relevant staff whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Assistant Principal responsible for wellbeing and engagement, or other relevant staff, if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We have an 'open door' approach where students and staff are partners in learning and we focus on re-engaging with learning as soon as appropriate.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:



- Respectful Relationships
- Safe Schools
- delivering programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour or social/emotional needs (i.e. cyber safety programs)
- providing opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- teachers are aware of our school’s proactive ‘preconditions for effective teaching’ expectations:

Northcote High School Preconditions for highly effective teaching in Every Classroom, Every day
Knowing our students. Teachers have learnt about their students using a variety of data and interpersonal communication that show an interest in the student as a person and a learner.
Connecting with students. Teachers have made a connection with each student on a personal level so that the child feels known, safe to ask questions, connected to the teacher
Connecting the class. A sense of ‘group’ has been formed. Eg “We are a group who will be doing [subject] together”
Relational and Positive Behaviour Norms: Shared values and expectations have been established and articulated and are actively taught (recognizing that these are learned behaviours and can be taught and missteps can be acknowledged). Eg: “We treat each other’s ideas with respect and interest and engage with them.” “We come prepared.” “We respond to feedback.” “We return work on time.” “We are on time to class”.
Learning and Teaching Behaviour Norms: Organisational norms and routines for the classroom that enable efficient use of learning time have been established in line with school-wide agreements. Eg. teaching students how to organize their books, represent ideas, follow a structure, write legibly, track corrections and changes, track questions”, etc. “We are careful with mathematical ideas and are curious about patterns and problems.” “We will write every day using the language of our subject.” “We experiment with possibilities.” “We analyse errors and missteps.” “We ask questions.”

Targeted

- Each class group has a Class Tutor, a teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their class, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support.
- All students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.
- All Koorie students will be connected with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- 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.
- 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 and will apply approaches relevant to working with those students.
- All students who meet the DET criteria for the Program for Students with Disabilities will receive extra support in accordance with the program.

Individual

The items below will be considered on a case by case basis and will in some cases rely on DET programs or funding to support our actions

- 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 and Student Support Services
- referral to Learning Places Connect, ChildFirst, Headspace, Navigator, Lookout or other appropriate services.

Northcote High 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
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.



4. Identifying students in need of support

Northcote High School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially.

At our school, student wellbeing is the responsibility of every staff member and every teacher is a teacher of wellbeing. In addition to our Tutors (teachers assigned to each group), subschool leaders and the Assistant Principal are responsible for Student Wellbeing and Engagement and their team play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Northcote High 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 or parents

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, 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/or approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.



6. 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 Northcote High School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Northcote High School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department of Education Student Wellbeing and Engagement 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.

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 or SubschooL Leader
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour review meetings with parents/carers
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department of Education's policy, available at:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spaq/participation/pages/suspensions.aspx>

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

In applying a Restorative Practices Approach, teachers will apply the following continuum:

THE CONTINUUM OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES: TEACHERS' GUIDE

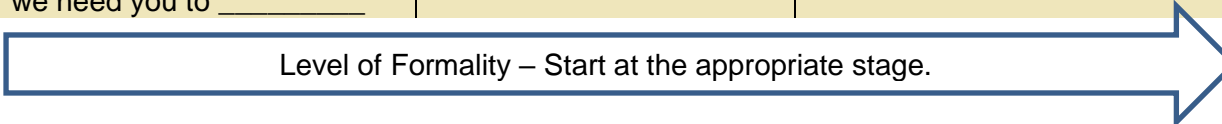
OUR AIM FOR RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

- Provide an opportunity to reinforce school values
- All participants have a sense of justice and fairness.
- Participants gain an insight into the impact of their behaviours on others.
- A healing of hurt and a repairing of the damaged relationship.
- Continue to offer support and a sense of belonging.
- A sense of community is heightened when students, teachers and parents are equally valued as participants at a conference.

TEACHERS may begin their interventions at any of Stages 1-3.

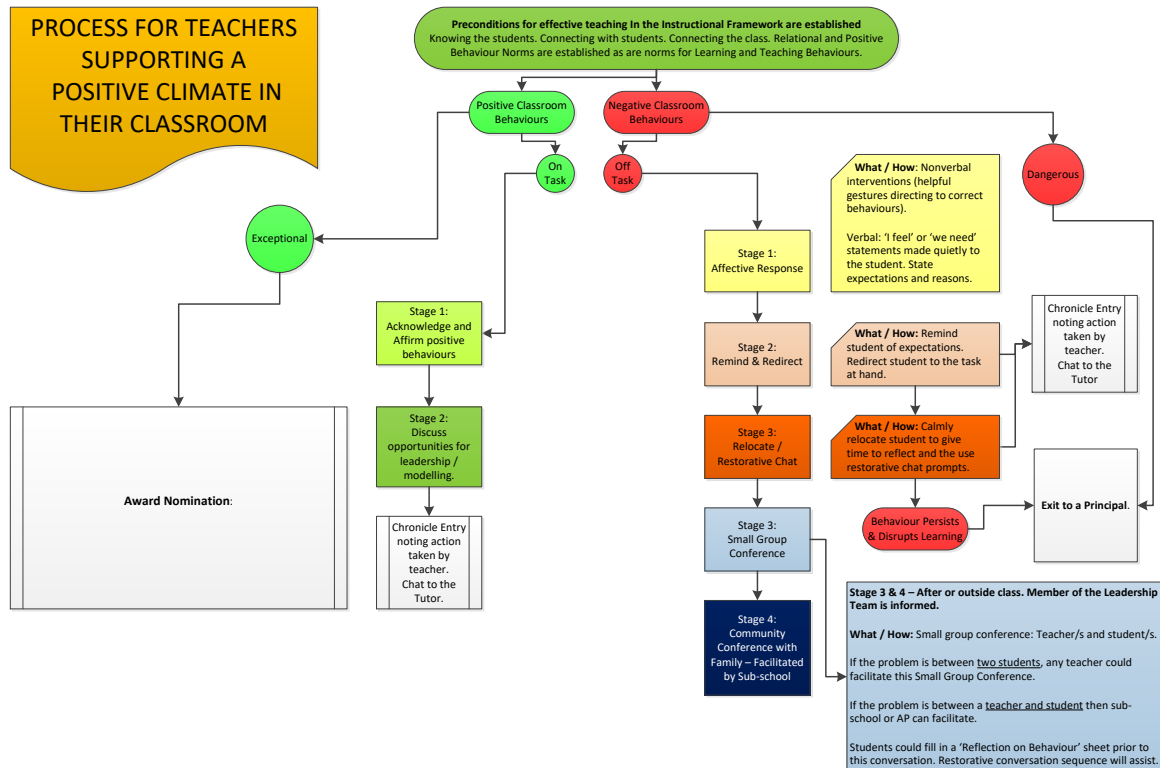
STAGE 1: Teacher AFFECTIVE RESPONSE	STAGE 2: Teacher REMIND & REDIRECT	STAGE 3: Teacher RELOCATION/RESTORATIVE CHAT
What / How: Nonverbal interventions + Verbal Interventions such as 'I' or 'we' statements made quietly to the student	What / How: Remind student of expectation or agreements and assist them to reengage in the task.	What / How: To provide reflection time either: calmly move the student to a new seat, or advise that they will stay back for a chat
Example: Make eye contact in order to gesture to the task at hand. Example: When you _____ I feel _____ I need you to _____ Or: By _____ the learning of others is interrupted and we need you to _____	Example: Remember (we spoke about / agreed / it is expected that) _____. Can you see what is next in this task? Do you need any assistance to re-engage in this task?	Example: "I'd like you to come and sit here and in a minute we can chat about what's happened and what can help you refocus." "We will need to have a quick chat after the bell about what's happened today and how next lesson can be better."

Level of Formality – Start at the appropriate stage.



STAGE 4: Teacher & Member of the Leadership Team if required	STAGE 5:
Small Group Conference: If behaviour has continued after Stage 3.	Community Conference with a member of the Leadership Team and parents / students
What / How: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group conference: Teacher/s and student/s. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the problem is between <u>two students</u>, any teacher could facilitate this Small Group Conference. ○ If the problem is between a <u>teacher and student</u> then sub-school or another teacher can facilitate • Students should write a 'Reflection on Behaviour' prior to this conversation 	What / How: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As for Stage 4. • Member of the leadership team co-ordinates conference. • May require a learning agreement to be formalised.

The Staged Response to behavioural issues is as outlined below. Note: A Teacher may initiate a response at any of Stages 1-3 depending on the behaviours and context of the moment. (A full-size version is contained in Appendix #1):



7. Engaging with families

Northcote High 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 relevant school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by relevant policies.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving our community in school forums to gather advice and input to decision making
- supporting an active and engaged School Council
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students where these are required.

8. Evaluation

Northcote High 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

Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards, and related relevant policies can be found on our school website.

All staff are required to be familiar with the Department of Education's Restraint of Students Policy

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/Pages/restraint.aspx>

Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the Principal and our school will follow the processes for applying these disciplinary measures set out in the Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy. Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that our school can be found here:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/suspensions.aspx>

In all its interactions the school follows:

- the provisions of the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, that prohibits discrimination against people in the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, or potential pregnancy
- the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 1995, which aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments, their sexual orientation or their age;
- the provisions of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (2006) by recognising that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights;
- the provisions of the Disability Standards for Education Act 2005 where a member of the school community with a disability is able to participate in the curriculum and use the facilities and services provided by the School.
- the provisions of the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001, which makes it unlawful for individuals to vilify other persons on the grounds of religion or race

REVIEW CYCLE

Changes to this policy that are not substantive may be made by the policy owner or the Principal from time-to-time (for example, correcting a grammatical error).

Substantive changes may be made by the policy owner or Principal with immediate effect in response to amended policy guidance from DET. In these circumstances the amended policy will be tabled at the next Governance Committee and/or School Council.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change.

This policy was ratified by School Council on December 2018.

Appendix #1 to the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

