



**Burwood East
Special Developmental School
2022**

**Student
Well-Being & Engagement Policy**

**Acting Principal: Helen Smith
School Council President: Mark Moon**



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact school on 03 9803 4590.

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 respectful, safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all 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.

Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, 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 safety, wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, respectful, supportive, and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

If you do not understand any aspect of this policy, or you would like to talk about any concerns you have, please contact our school on 03 9803 4590 or burwood.east.sds@education.vic.gov.au

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps, and excursions.

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1. School profile statement

BESDS provides educational programs for students assessed with a moderate to severe intellectual disability. The students may also have multiple diagnoses including autism spectrum disorder, physical, hearing, or visual impairments. We are in the eastern Melbourne suburb of East Burwood and have an attractive and secure environment with extensive outdoor learning spaces. Teaching spaces are stimulating and well equipped.

The school currently has 79 school age students, and 14 pre-school students in the Early Education Program. The school zone covers eastern suburbs located in the cities of Whitehorse, Knox, Maroondah, Boroondara, Manningham and Monash, including the suburbs of Nunawading,

Blackburn, Box Hill, Burwood, Balwyn, Hawthorn, Kew, Doncaster, Templestowe, and Vermont South. Eligible school-aged students living within the designated transport zone have access to a transport service. The Early Education program caters for children with additional learning needs from 2.8 years to 5 years of age for 2 groups x 2 days a week.

The school has three buildings, two of which contain regular classrooms and specialist spaces and an administration wing with staff facilities and a multipurpose space. The buildings catering for younger students is called the Primary section and the buildings catering for the older students is called the Secondary section.

Individual Learning Plans are developed by the teaching staff for each student in conjunction with parents and therapists. Emphasis on current curriculum initiatives and priorities ensures that students are provided with the maximum opportunity for improved learning outcomes. Teaching practice and curriculum delivery are constantly reviewed and updated to reflect student needs. The school's future focus is to maintain emphasis on the 'whole child as a learner', recognising safety and wellbeing as a prerequisite for student learning. This is coupled with a renewed focus on curriculum delivery and classroom practice to ensure that staff are supported in their delivery of the Victorian Curriculum - adjusted to meet the needs of the students in their class. Teachers continue to use Abilities Based Learning and Education support (ABLES) as an assessment tool to establish learning readiness, which is used to support teacher judgments for the students learning and personal goals.

We continue to provide professional learning and support for our mainstream colleagues by inviting them to visit, observe our practices and be involved in professional discussions with our staff. We also visit mainstream settings where our students are dual enrolled to attend Student Support Group meetings and offer staff our support, aids and strategies aimed at enhancing student engagement and maximize learning outcomes. We offer our mainstream colleagues the opportunity to participate in relevant professional learning workshops that we offer to all our staff. We promote opportunities for parents to participate in school life through special events.

The school is in a suburban area surrounded by houses at the end of a no-through road. In the next 2 to 5 years there will be major rebuilding projects involving the buildings and grounds with an emphasis on tailoring the teaching spaces to suit the learning needs of the students. Whilst providing safety, the environment will encourage and challenge students to learn, explore and develop independence.

There is a focus on developing communication skills, academic skills, and independence, following the Victorian Curriculum and the ASDAN curriculum. Students graduate at 18 years of age to appropriate NDIS adult services, implemented through the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The teaching staff are supported by specialists in Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, and specialist teachers for music, art, and physical education. The school is also supported by a consultant Paediatric Physiotherapist. If required, students access the Visiting Teacher Services for Vision and Hearing Impairment.

Burwood East Special Developmental School continues to build on our expertise with the teamwork and combined efforts of teachers, therapists, and education support to improve student achievement and the wellbeing of students. All our staff have been well trained and are well versed in their respective capacities to maintain Burwood East SDS as a Child Safe School, a school where respectful relationships are an intrinsic part of every interaction with students and families and where diversity and inclusivity are fundamental components of creating a Safe School environment in which every student is valued and respected.

2. School Values, philosophy, and vision

At Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS), we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive school environment where everyone can be happy, confident, and resilient, regardless of their sexual or gender identity, cultural background disability or other circumstances. We take account of the diversity of all children, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement, and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students. We continue to build on our existing expertise to become a leading educational provider and to be recognised by the wider community as a school of choice for special needs education.

The programs and teaching at BESDS support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance
- gender equality and respectful relationships.

This policy outlines our school's vision, mission, objective, values, and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our intranet and from the front office.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

- display posters and banners that promote our values in our school
- celebrate our values in our school newsletter
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- explicitly teach our values with students in the classroom, at meetings and assemblies.

VISION

BESDS' vision is to promote independence through active learning.

MISSION

BESDS' mission is to provide students with additional learning needs with a challenging and enjoyable curriculum, using evidence based pedagogical approaches.

OBJECTIVE

BESDS' objective is to ensure all students leave our school as independent as possible.

VALUES

The everyday school values devised for students to understand are as follows:

- Be a communicator
- Be a learner
- Be safe

At Burwood East SDS we: take responsibility for our learning; strive for a safe and positive school environment for all; and treat each other with respect. BESDS follows the philosophy of Positive Behaviour Support. Every student has an Individual Learning Plan focusing on pre-academic and academic learning, the development of personal and social competence and the progressive attainment of independence. The school promotes a learning environment where students and staff are respected, and self-worth and dignity are strongly advocated. The promotion of positive student behaviour, self-esteem, emotional well-being, tolerance, and respect is encouraged. Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a framework that helps us to plan and implement practices across the whole school, to improve educational and behaviour outcomes for all students. These values are displayed in all learning spaces in the school.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

BESDS acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers, and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

As principals and school leaders, we will:

- Work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful, responsible, and safe conduct is expected of everyone.
- Behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide inclusive, safe, and orderly environments.
- Plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure the care, safety, security, and general wellbeing of all students in attendance at the school is protected.
- Identify and support students who are or may be at risk.
- Do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential.
- Work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Respond appropriately when inclusive, safe, or orderly behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions
- Make known to parents/carers the school's communication and complaints procedures.
- Ask any person who is acting in an offensive or disorderly way to leave the school grounds.

As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

- Model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession.
- Proactively engage with parents about student outcomes.
- Work with parents/carers to understand the needs of each student adapt the learning environment and improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for all students
- Communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect.

As parents and carers, we will:

- Model positive behaviour to our child.
- Ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- Take an interest in our child's school and learning.
- Work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child.
- Communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns.
- Support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.
- Follow the school's complaints processes if there are complaints.

- Treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

As students, with support we will:

- Model positive behaviour to other students.
- Model school values.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
- Actively participate in school.
- Make the most of our educational opportunities.

As community members, we will:

- Model positive behaviour to the school community.
- Treat other members of the school community with respect.
- Support school staff to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.
- Utilize the school's communications policy to communicate with the school.

UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Schools are not public places, and the principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds (for more information, see our *Visitors Policy*).

Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students, or members of our school community will not be tolerated at school, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- speaking or behaving in a rude, manipulative, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via electronic communication or social media, or over the telephone
- the use or threat of violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- sending demanding, rude, confronting, or threatening letters, emails, or text messages
- sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff, or students.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies:

Our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional, or educational support to flourish at school, and we have strategies in place to identify these students and provide them with the support they need. Our school works collaboratively with students and parents / carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the student themselves and others.

Implementation:

Our staff, programs, and policies support student engagement at Burwood East SDS in the following ways:

- Individual student learning plans (ILPs) addressing individual needs, interests and skills, curriculum content, and individual learning goals
- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Student attendance is recorded and monitored daily
- Late arrival and early departure records
- Follow up phone calls and emails to families if an absence has not been reported
- Special responsibilities and activities for students that promote student agency (e.g., Senior Choir and Meals on Wheels Team leaders, Recycling Team leaders, P.E. team leaders, Café Team leaders, Bowling team leaders)
- Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging, and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers students to participate and feel valued
- Positive relationships developed with students and their families / carers through open communication
- Promotion of gender equality, respectful relationships, and school values

Positive behaviour is encouraged by:

- The use of motivators, reinforcement, and praise for appropriate learning behaviours
- The provision of programs to practise social behaviours (e.g., eating/drinking appropriately, social skills development, class programs, specialist programs, cooking programs, ASDAN programs)
- The provision of opportunities to practise pro-social behaviour in the community (e.g., Meals on wheels, community gym, bowling, gardening programs, excursions, camps and so on)
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- Social skills, play therapy and play skills programs
- The development of individual social stories and video models to promote positive and appropriate behaviour
- The provision of structures to support positive behaviour including the development of Prevent, Teach, Reinforce – School Based individualized Positive Behaviour Support plans
- The development of appropriate individualised communication systems/programs

Student well-being is addressed by:

- The ILP process leading to the achievement of individual goals
- Student Support Groups (SSGs)
- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, personal care, and self – care and motivation

- The inclusion of all students through programs incorporating different learning styles, teaching methods and strategies
- Creating opportunities for cross -age connections amongst students through e.g., peer support programs
- Specialist programs including performing arts, visual arts, physical education, creative movement, and therapy programs.
- A collaborative team approach: Teachers, Education Support Officers, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapist, Family Support Coordinator
- Appropriate professional development for staff in child safety, health management, curriculum, and teaching and learning, trauma informed approach to engaging students in learning and promoting student wellbeing
- Referral to other appropriate support services

Communication

- The staff at BESDS uphold the right of a family and/or student to select a preferred method of communication. It is with this in mind, therefore, that we do not have a preferred system of AAC in the school. We work in collaboration with students/families and external therapists to support student acquisition of communication.

Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy

- OT and Physio support at BESDS is provided within the scope of relevant DET policy frameworks; Restraint and Seclusion, Working with External NDIS Practitioners, Use of Sensory Rooms in Schools. Our approach is in collaboration with parents/guardians and is always in support of student learning, wellbeing and engagement. Teachers refer to the team and consultation and intervention records are stored on the student files at school.
- BESDS facilitates all transitions into and out of the school on an individual basis and in consultation with parents.
The Family Support Coordinator provides support for families and carers by linking them with community-based resources. Parents are linked with external agencies for longer term support that is outside the educational needs of students such as respite, family support and other family specific issues. The Secondary Section Coordinator, Family Support Coordinator and staff, support graduating students to make the successful transition from school to NDIS programs of choice.

4. Identifying students in need of additional support:

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

Our school will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra support by using the following strategies:

- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Attendance rates
- Academic performance
- Behaviour observed by classroom staff

- Collaboration with schools where students are dual enrolled
- Issues raised at staff meeting regarding student wellbeing and safety
- Engagement with student families
- Working with external agencies e.g., DFFS, Australian Childhood Foundation, Foundation House

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 Rights and Responsibilities Statement highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel respected, 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 are expected to:

- display positive behaviours that demonstrate responsibility, respect and safety for themselves, their peers, their teachers, and all other members of the school community
- participate fully in their education
- respect the rights of others to learn, to contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students
- Learn positive behaviours which contribute to the educational, social, emotional, and physical development of themselves and those around them. Students are actively supported by staff to achieve this goal.
- Express their needs, choices, interests, and decisions

Burwood East SDS parents/carers are expected to:

- promote positive educational outcomes for their child by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress
- work with the school by participating in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning and wellbeing
- actively support their child's engagement in the school environment
- support the school in maintaining an inclusive, safe, and respectful learning environment for all students
- Support their child by ensuring regular attendance and modelling positive and respectful behaviour.

Student behavioural expectations

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, Burwood East SDS 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
- 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 BESDS 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.

BESDS promotes a learning environment where students and staff are respected, and self-worth and dignity are strongly advocated. The promotion of positive student behaviour, self-esteem, emotional well-being, tolerance, and respect is encouraged. A strong ethos of parent and family support and community involvement is evident throughout the school.

- Students who attend a special school setting may at times exhibit behaviours that are of concern. We see all behaviour as a form of communication and/or sensory difficulties, health, or medical issues.
- At Burwood East SDS we believe that all behaviour has a specific function/purpose. We recognise that students with an intellectual disability may have impairment in the areas of communication and social skill development; therefore, students at Burwood East SDS often require an individualised approach that focuses on understanding the individual's learning/emotional needs;

having knowledge of the triggers that give rise to behaviours of concern; and adapting the environment and teaching strategies to avoid trigger and cater for the student's individual needs.

We aim to improve educational outcomes for students by:

- encouraging behaviour that influences positively and consistently on learning outcomes.
- developing skills and knowledge in our school for better teaching and learning
- creating and maintaining a better school environment for students, teachers, and the whole school community
- promoting positive support behaviour strategies and skill development, whilst also minimizing any safety risks to students or staff

The Prevent, Teach, Reinforce model provides our school with a decision-making framework that uses data to guide selection and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioural practices across the whole school.

This model

- Investigates the functional relationship between environment and behaviour
- Supports understanding the purpose and appropriateness of using functional assessment to analyse behaviour
- Develops a practical understanding of how to assess behavior using the Prevent – Teach – Reinforce (PTR) model
- Supports developing a Behaviour Support Plan using the results of the PTR assessment

Prevent – Teach -Reinforce

- Evidence – based approach to supporting students who exhibit behaviours of concern that is based on a functional assessment process
- Develop individualized BSP for students for whom other interventions have not worked
- Collaborative model

Goal setting/Data Collection

- Team task is to identify the behaviour of most concern and consider possible alternative behaviours
- Operationally define behaviour
- Develop and begin baseline data collection
- Can focus on behaviours of concern, social skills, or academic behaviours

Individual Behaviour Rating Scale Tool (IBRST)

- Direct Behaviour Rating (DBR) – Hybrid assessment combining features of systematic direct observations and rating scales
- Efficient and feasible for the teacher to use
- Provides data for decisions
- Prioritized and defined behaviours measured
- Requires minimum of one appropriate and one inappropriate behaviour

PTR Assessment checklist

Used to conduct the functional assessment of behaviour

Identifies the setting events and antecedents (prevent), function of behaviour (teach) and reinforcers for the behaviour (reinforce)

- Prevent – identifies the environmental event and circumstances that can lead to behaviours of concern occurring
- Teach – analyses function

- Reinforce – identifies what happens after the behaviour of concern and can lead to developing reinforcement strategies for the replacement behaviour

PTR Assessment

- The PTR Assessment checklist is completed by each team member
- The data gets compiled by the facilitator
- The assessment will generally occur after there has been direct observation of the student by the facilitator of the meeting
- This is to ensure that the assessment is as objective as possible

Behaviour Support Plans

- The PTR model is used to develop a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)
- Interventions are chosen
- Interventions are described in detail by completing a task analysis of steps involved
- Interventions steps are written as adult behaviours not student behaviours

(The University of Melbourne)

Positive Behaviour Support plans are developed in collaboration with parents /carers and shared with stakeholders.

The everyday values devised for students to understand as part of the PRT are as follows:

Be a communicator
Be a learner
Be safe

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/guidance/4-respond-challenging-behaviour>
- <https://detbehavioursupport.vic.edu.au/>

7. Engaging with families

Burwood East SDS 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 encourage open communication with parents and the school community through daily diaries, telephone contact, SSG meetings, parent teacher meetings and newsletters. We also value communication with other stakeholders such as NDIS, Department of Family Fairness and Housing and other service providers.

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.
- involving families in e.g., curriculum based incursions and special events
- 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

BESDS 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:

- Attitudes to school survey
- BESDS Parent survey
- incidents data
- school reports
- other feedback sourced by the school
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS
- regularly monitoring 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 : <https://www.besds.vic.edu.au/>

- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school 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 and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

<https://www.besds.vic.edu.au/>

- 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	October 2022
Approval and Consultation With School Council	12/10/2022
Consultation with school community by newsletter	04/11/2022
Consultation with school community by website	November 2022
Approved by Principal	24/10/2022
Next scheduled review date	October 2024