Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact (03) 9968 2500.

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

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is a Department of Education (DE) school located within the Royal Children's Hospital. The school has been established to provide

education for children and young people who are inpatients of the Royal Children's Hospital. The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School delivers education services alongside a patient's treatment, recovery and reintegration to their base school/kindergarten. It supports patients with significant health challenges who are unable to attend their regular educational setting due to their health condition, or who are at risk of disengaging from education. The intent of the school is to provide educational experiences and outcomes that children and young people would have had, had they not been experiencing a significant health condition.

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School educators work closely with the young person, their caregivers, their treating team and their base education setting. Our team members work closely with Royal Children's Hospital medical/health professionals as part of a multidisciplinary approach and provide education for students aged 5-18 years of age. We aim to build a safe and supportive environment and culture, one that promotes positive relationships, values diversity and supports the holistic development of our students.

While the child or young person is an inpatient of Royal Children's Hospital the teachers also act as educational advocates for the young person and their caregivers.

- Treatment Phase: Establish and maintain contact with the young person's base education setting in a supportive and confidential manner to provide continuity with their learning.
- Recovery Phase: Coordinated, scaffolded support and liaison connecting home, Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School and base schools for the period the young person is recovering at home.
- Reintegration Phase: Provide support to the young person and their caregivers to assist in a smooth and positive reintegration to the base education setting.

The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is an integral part of a multidisciplinary team with access to a range of Royal Children's Hospital medical and health personnel, including but not limited to doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, interpreters, indigenous liaison officers, and social workers.

The student population is extremely fluid and changes daily, depending on the number of children and young people who are inpatients of Royal Children's Hospital. The time frame that students are supported by the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is varied and can range from a couple of days to several months or years.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School vision

Great care, through unique and individualised educational experiences, designed to help our learners thrive and succeed, everywhere.

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School mission

We design and deliver targeted and individualised learning to improve valued learner outcomes (academic, developmental, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing) for students. We set our learners up for success by ensuring they experience continuous engagement in learning through seamless transitions connecting the hospital, the home, and their education setting. We champion for our students and their caregivers, so they ultimately become their own champions.

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School values

- **Joy** - We are inspired by fun, creativity, and wonder.
- **Advocacy** - We advocate for and empower our learners and caregivers.
- **Growth** - We set high expectations for our learners to reach their full potential.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital 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, targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal (Tier 1)

- High and consistent expectations of all Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School team members, students and parents and caregivers
- 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
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as student and parent survey data
- Deliver a broad curriculum that is tailored to student's interests, strengths and aspirations
- Adopt a 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
- Welcoming all parents/caregivers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- Carefully plan transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged
- Students can contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through consumer surveys. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and medical care team members whenever they have any questions or concerns
- Create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through encouraging group learning attendance (when deemed medically appropriate)
- Opportunities for student inclusion

Targeted (Tier 2)

- PERMAH Wellbeing Curriculum
  - Our targeted wellbeing curriculum is grounded in Professor Martin Seligman's PERMAH framework (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment and Health). The PERMAH factors and amplifiers inform teaching, planning and reflective practice across targeted supports. This evidence-informed framework underpins the explicit teaching of wellbeing knowledge, skills and strategies designed to strengthen resilience, protective

factors and self-awareness. Learning experiences are intentionally differentiated to address identified student needs, equipping students with practical tools and shared language to navigate challenge, transition and vulnerability.

Targeted interventions are aligned with the Department of Education's High Impact Wellbeing Strategies (HIWS). Supports are responsive to student voice, wellbeing data and identified risk or need, and may include individualised plans, short-term targeted programs, or small-group intervention.

Within Group Learning environments, wellbeing instruction is deliberately sequenced across the term to ensure structured exposure to a range of evidence-based strategies. At an individual level, targeted wellbeing goals are documented within each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and embedded into daily learning sessions. Teachers incorporate intentional practices such as emotional check-ins to assess readiness for learning, and structured reflection to consolidate insight, build self-regulation and reinforce progress toward individual goals.

- Trauma-Informed Practice
  - Applying trauma-informed practices in a hospital-based education setting is paramount to providing a supportive and conducive learning environment that prioritises students' wellbeing. Recognising the potential impact of trauma on students' lives, a trauma-informed approach ensures that educators and staff are attuned to the unique needs of each learner. By creating a culture of safety, trust, and empowerment, educators establish an environment where students feel secure to engage with their education. This approach involves understanding the prevalence and effects of trauma, adopting trauma-sensitive teaching methods, and providing appropriate resources for students who may require additional support.

Individual (Tier 3)

The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- Individualised Education Planning
  - All eligible students receive an IEP that is designed to focus on both learning and wellbeing, the two key outcomes of the Framework for Improvement Student Outcomes (FISO 2.0). Each stage in the development and implementation of the student's IEP is designed to promote engagement and enhance wellbeing. The IEP consists of four stages, as outlined below:

IEP Stage	Description
Assess	In the 'assess' stage of the IEP, educators prioritise establishing strong connections with students and caregivers to gain insights into the whole student, including their unique learning and wellbeing needs. The focus is on identifying and addressing potential stressors, challenges, and barriers that may affect their overall wellbeing and engagement in the learning

	process. Acknowledging and celebrating students' strengths and achievements is integral to this stage. Students are recognised as active agents in their learning, and their voices are actively sought to define their optimal learning conditions. Strategies are designed to nurture their interests and passions, aiming to cultivate a positive sense of wellbeing both during and after their hospital admission. Caregivers are valued as essential partners, providing crucial perspectives to enhance their child's educational journey.
Plan	Alongside the required literacy and numeracy goals, each student's IEP includes a defined personal interest goal and a Wellbeing goal. This goal supports students to engage in their learning and become creative and confident individuals with a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing.
Teach	In addressing each student's Wellbeing goal, teaching strategies, supports and adjustments explicitly reference and utilise the DE's High Impact Wellbeing Strategies (HIWS). These evidence-informed strategies have demonstrated a significant positive effect on student wellbeing.
Evaluate	Student goals, and the teaching strategies, supports and adjustments undergo continuous monitoring and evaluation to gauge their impact and effectiveness. This continual reflection ensures that the IEP is responsive to the changing learning and wellbeing needs of the student. Successful interventions that enhance student engagement and wellbeing are not only acknowledged but also shared with base schools. This collaborative approach ensures the dissemination of effective practices to improve valued outcomes for students.

- Targeted Referrals and Community Service Engagement, referring the student to:
  - Hospital and or school-based wellbeing-related supports
  - Appropriate external supports such as youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst. This will be carried out by the Royal Children's Hospital treating team members.
  - Re-engagement programs, such as Navigator.

- Case Conferences and Student Support Group Meetings (SSGs)

  Participation in Royal Children's Hospital Case Conferences and Student Support Group meetings, if appropriate, for students:

  - With a disability
  - Who have a chronic health condition
  - Who have disengaged from education
  - In Out of Home Care and
  - With other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is dedicated to supporting students in achieving valued outcomes across academic, developmental, physical, social, and wellbeing domains. To ensure comprehensive support, the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School has established targeted strategies for identifying and assisting students who may require additional support. The Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School employs the following methods:

- *Electronic Medical Record Review:* View patient profiles for identification of risk flags/factors that are available from the Royal Children's Hospital.
- *Consultation:* liaison with students, caregivers, multidisciplinary teams, and base schools during intake, throughout admission, and beyond.
- *Observations:* Regular assessments by educators, treatment teams, and base schools, focusing on changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness, and motivation.

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 caregivers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- Participate fully in their education
- Feel safe, secure and happy at school
- Learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- Express their ideas, feelings and concerns
- Have agency in addressing their learning and wellbeing needs.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Actively inform their individual education plans (where appropriate)
- 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
- Contribute to a safe environment.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School are encouraged to speak to their caregivers and approach a trusted teacher, a member of the school leadership team, or a member of their Royal Children's Hospital treatment team.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of

Vision and Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School's Bullying Prevention Policy. When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. Where appropriate, parents/caregivers will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour. Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such, withdrawal of service. All the above issues would be discussed with the Royal Children's Hospital treatment team and the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School Leadership team before any action is taken.

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:

- Advising 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
- Referral to the Ward/School Leader
- Restorative practices.

Suspension, expulsion (not occurring at Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School) and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy
- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy
- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy

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

The principal of the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital 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.

7. Engaging with families

At Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School, we value caregivers for their vital role in enhancing students' educational experience. Actively seeking their input, we prioritise collaboration for advancing student learning and wellbeing outcomes. Through open communication and engagement, we encourage caregivers to share their perspectives which guides our educational and wellbeing strategies, aligning them with individual student needs and aspirations. Committed to building caregiver capacity, we empower them to advocate effectively for their child. This advocacy

extends both throughout and beyond admission, fostering successful partnerships between the school, hospital, and the base schools.

We are dedicated to cultivating successful partnerships with parents and caregivers by:

- Ensuring that all parents/caregivers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- Maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/caregivers and Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School team members
- Involving families in school decision making
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- Encouraging active participation of caregivers in Student Support Groups, hospital-based case conferences (when appropriate), and collaboratively developing individual education plans for students
- Building caregiver capacity to effectively advocate for their child, providing them with the necessary tools and knowledge to actively participate in their child's education.

8. Evaluation

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital 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
- Parent survey data
- Case management data
- Compass
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School will also regularly monitor available data 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
- Included in staff induction processes

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/caregiver notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions (not at Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School) outlined in the Department's policies at:

- Suspension process
- Expulsions - Decision

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
  - 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

- Related Policies:
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - Bullying Prevention Policy
  - Statement of Values and School Philosophy
  - Complaints Policy
  - Duty of Care Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2026
Consultation	Will occur in March 2026, school council meeting
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2028 – to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years thereafter.