

Student Learning and Wellbeing At Esk State School

Wellbeing is a state in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

– World Health Organisation, 2014

Wellbeing – connected to learning

Our young people are growing up in a world driven by new technologies and economic globalisation. Their future means they need a new set of cognitive, social and emotional skills for success.

Healthy, confident and resilient young people who can successfully navigate a more complex world are vital for Queensland's future.

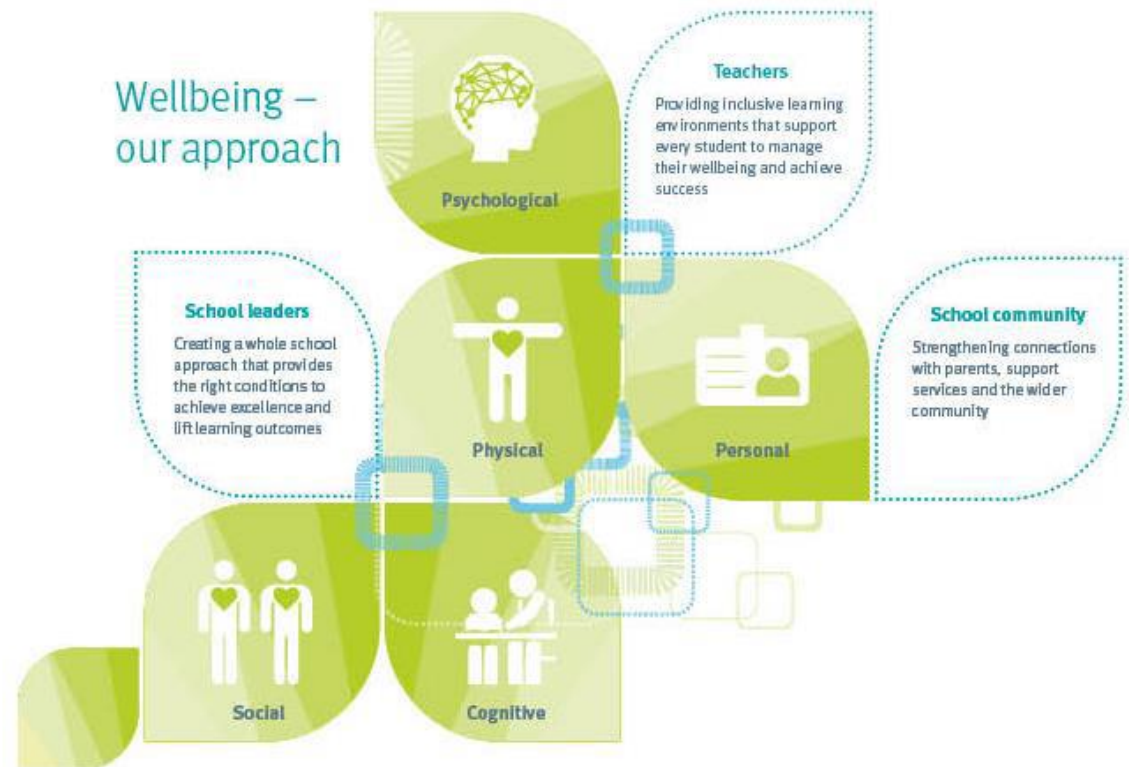
We know that a supportive environment that combines a focus on wellbeing with a focus on learning is optimal — without one, the other will not happen.

Responding to individual and group differences, promoting collaborative learning, connecting to the hearts and minds of every student, and teaching students how to manage their wellbeing, are just some of the ways our teachers are making sure students thrive.

Esk State School continues to provide an inclusive environment that nurtures the wellbeing of all students so they become resilient lifelong learners who respond positively to their changing world and pursue their passions with confidence.

Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework

School staff play a significant role in supporting the wellbeing and mental health of their students. The Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework guides the school in implementing a whole school approach to supporting students' wellbeing and mental health and provides concrete ways that staff can nurture their students' wellbeing. On the next page the three pronged approach is mapped against the framework from Be You, and demonstrates how the school's approach maps against other frameworks.





1

Creating safe, supportive and inclusive environments

Schools do this by:

- providing safe environments where diversity is valued, positive social interactions are promoted, and risk of injury or harm is minimised
- developing an approach to wellbeing that supports the collective action of parents, support services and the wider community
- demonstrating and communicating positive respectful relationships between staff, students, parents and members of the community
- explicitly teaching and modelling social and emotional skills, values and expectations for behaviour to support student wellbeing
- making sure the physical environment and school policies and practices are accessible and inclusive of students and families
- planning for opportunities to promote and celebrate the traditions, values and cultures of the school community
- providing learning opportunities and environments that promote healthy lifestyle choices.



2

Building the capability of staff, students and the school community

Schools do this by:

- providing health and wellbeing learning opportunities for students through curriculum focused on mental health, relationships and sexuality, alcohol and other drugs, food and nutrition, benefits of physical activity, and safety
- identifying opportunities to build the capabilities of teachers and school leaders to support a whole school approach to student wellbeing and its connection to learning
- communicating information and advice on the benefits of supporting young people to be healthy, confident and resilient
- responding positively to the needs of different groups within the school community
- strengthening connections with parents to support early intervention for students whose wellbeing is at risk
- increasing visibility of local support services to families whose children have higher levels of need
- supporting staff health and wellbeing and recognising the resulting benefits for students
- committing to continual improvement using evidence-based strategies to improve student wellbeing, seeking ways to develop and share new ideas.



3

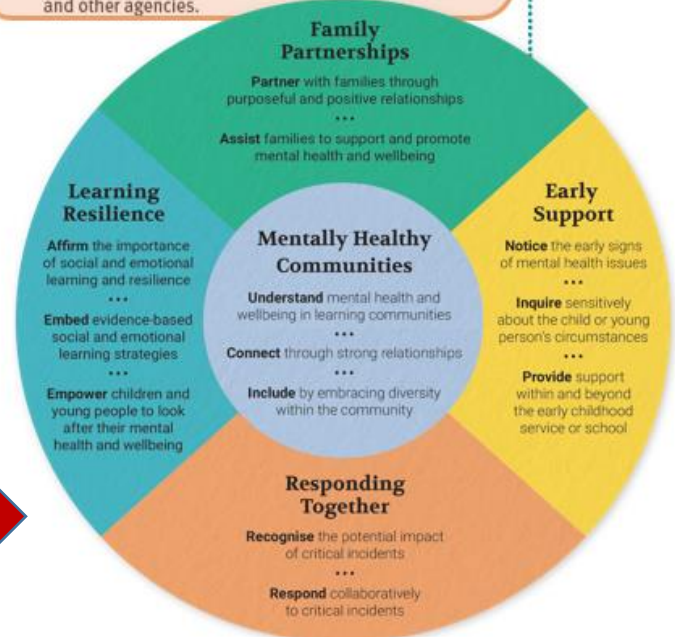
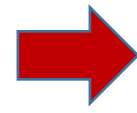
Developing strong systems for early intervention

Schools do this by:

- planning and documenting school processes to support staff to respond appropriately to students at risk
 - recognising the early signs that a student's wellbeing is at risk and responding appropriately by noticing, inquiring, planning
- sharing responsibility for supporting students at risk by:
- seeking support from Guidance Officers and the leadership team as first responders
 - encouraging students and families to access support services
 - using a wrap-around approach for students involving parents, school support services, health professionals and other agencies.

On this page, the DoE framework for Student Learning and Wellbeing has been mapped against the framework from that national initiative BE YOU for mental health and wellbeing.

Be You is a national initiative for educators, aimed at promoting and protecting positive mental health in children and young people. Our vision is for an education system in which every learning community is positive, inclusive and resilient, and where every child, young person, staff member, and family can achieve their best possible mental health.” <https://beyou.edu.au/getting-started>



Procedure – Supporting students’ mental health and wellbeing procedure

Supporting the framework, the [Supporting students’ mental health and wellbeing procedure](#) outlines the roles and responsibilities of school staff in promoting mental health and wellbeing, intervening early, and providing specialised intervention and case management for students with mental health concerns. For detailed information about what mental health is and how to recognise concerns in students see Fact sheet—Mental health (DOCX, 345KB). Additional information for school staff about the department’s approach to supporting students’ wellbeing and mental health is available on [OnePortal](#).

Staff can also access information and resources about supporting students’ wellbeing and mental health through national initiatives including:

[BeYou](#) a national initiative for educators, aimed at promoting and protecting positive mental health in children and young people.

[Student Wellbeing Hub](#) provides high quality, age-appropriate information and resources targeted specifically to educators, parents and students to support student wellbeing and safety.

As school staff, there may be times when students or families come to you for help and advice about how to support their wellbeing and mental health. It is important to follow your responsibilities outlined in the Supporting students’ mental health and wellbeing procedure and seek advice and support from your guidance officer or other members of your school’s student support team. In addition if you believe that a student or family is in need of additional or more intensive support, it is important to be able to point them in the right direction. The following agencies provide advice and support to young people and their families to ensure they can get the support they need.

For children and young people:

[Kids Helpline](#) provides information and advice for children and young people. This site is linked to the telephone counselling service.

[Beyond Blue](#) provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live.

[Youth Beyond Blue](#) is a dedicated site for young people that provides information, resources and support for young people dealing with depression and/or anxiety.

headspace provides tailored and holistic mental health support to 12-25 year olds. headspace has a focus on early intervention, working with young people to provide support to help get them back on track and strengthen their ability to manage their mental health in the future.

[Smiling Mind](#) is a mindfulness app for young people. It has been developed by a team of psychologists and uses mindfulness to boost calmness, contentment and clarity.

[Student Wellbeing Hub](#) provides high quality, age-appropriate information and resources targeted specifically to educators, parents and students to support student wellbeing and safety.

For parents, carers and families:

[Parentline](#) is a confidential phone and WebChat counselling service supporting parents and carers of children.

[Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women](#) provides information about support available for parents and carers in Queensland.

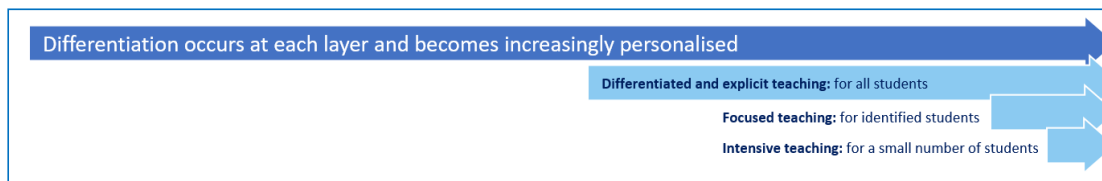
“More learning occurs in a joyous classroom where children feel safe, secure and accepted, and where they feel the teacher sees them for who they really are.” – Diamond 2010

[CYMHS \(Child Youth Mental Health Services\)](#) provides information about referral requirements and includes opening times and contact information.

[Student Wellbeing Hub](#) provides high quality, age-appropriate information and resources targeted specifically to educators, parents and students to support student wellbeing and safety.

Three Levels of Differentiation for Student Wellbeing

There are three main layers to differentiation, as illustrated in the diagram below. This model is the same used for academic and pedagogical differentiation.



Tier 1 is differentiated and explicit teaching for all students, Tier 2 is focussed teaching for identified students and Tier 3 is intensive support for a small number of students. Each layer provides progressively more personalised supports for students. How the added levels of differentiation roll out depends upon the unique circumstances and needs of the child.

At Esk State School student wellbeing is addressed in the following ways --

Differentiated and explicit teaching for all students:

- Foster a stable and positive learning environment and create a sense of belonging through strong relationships
- Implementation of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum.
- Inclusion of the Respectful Relationship Program into the PBL lessons.
- Implementation of the Student Code of Conduct
- Implementation of PBL at Esk State School. Builds resilience and positive behaviours through explicit instruction of social and emotional skills: self-awareness, emotional regulation, social-awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making
- Implementation of Inclusive practices
- Implementation of the Pedagogical Framework
- High levels of teacher aide access in classrooms to form teaching teams.
- Strong teacher and student relationships
- Parent and community involvement.
- Pastoral Care offered via Chaplaincy interacting with students within classrooms.

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- Teachers and Principal engaging in 1:1 meetings to discuss classroom needs.
- Safe and effective management of critical incidents

Focused Teaching for some students:

All of the differentiated and explicit teaching for all students' strategies plus –

- Further invest in relationships between educators and children/young people, and facilitate positive peer connections
- Increase awareness of relevant circumstances or adversity at home and school/early learning service
- Maintain routine and continue monitoring changes in learning, behaviour and relationships
- Pastoral care access to chaplain via student initiated contacts and other structured programs.
- Regular pastoral care access to chaplain with parent consent.
- Staff establish level of concern and discuss with principal during 1:1 meeting.
- Support to teacher or student through the Behaviour Support Team
- Support to teacher or student through the student learning and wellbeing team (Principal, STLaN/SET, GO, HOC)
- Guidance Officer support to teacher
- Intervention Programs for focused teaching
- Staff, Parents and Leadership form support team for student
- Curriculum adjustments
- Personal Learning adjustments
- Increase educational supports
- Additional supports in classroom and playground

Intensive Teaching for a small number of students:

- Referral to Guidance Officer
- Referral to external Health Providers and other professional support services.
- Collaborative work with families
- Collaboration with Health Professions
- Individual support plans.
- Student Protection notifications
- Suicide Intervention and Postvention Planning

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Mental Health – Determining level of concern

The [Be You Mental Health Continuum](#) is a tool for educators designed to assist in knowing when to seek support for a child or young person who may be experiencing mental health issues or in need of extra support.

An educator's role is not to diagnose mental health conditions – this can only be done by a health care professional. Instead their role is to notice changes in behaviour, know when to be concerned, and know where to refer to for help.



Mental health is like physical health. Children and young people will move along the Mental Health Continuum as a normal part of development. Someone with a mental health condition can flourish and lead a happy healthy life; just as someone who doesn't can experience poor mental health and require support.

As the continuum suggests, there is no clear point that identifies poor mental health, and so it can be hard to know when to be concerned.

As a result, having indicators can be helpful when thinking about your observations and how concerned to be. These indicators can be useful in establishing what next steps to take. While it's always best to act on the side of caution, reflecting on the ten questions opposite can help you determine whether you need to raise your concerns with the person responsible for wellbeing in your setting.

These questions can also be used to improve consistency in how different educators across services and schools respond to signs of distress, and how concerns about children and young people are communicated to staff responsible for their wellbeing.




The more you answer 'yes', the greater the level of concern			Yes	No
1	Development	Is this outside of what's expected at this stage of development?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Personal Change	Is this a noticeable change from their usual way of behaving?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Developmental Milestones	Does this differ to other children / young people of the same developmental stage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Duration	Has this been occurring for more than 2 weeks?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Context	Are you aware of any significant events or challenging circumstances they're facing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Distress	Does the child / young person seem bothered, concerned or upset by what's occurring?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Frequency	Is this occurring more days than not?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Pervasiveness	Is this occurring across multiple settings and situations? (inside or outside learning environments, at transition times, during certain learning experiences, home or broader community)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Impact	Is this having an impact on their relationships, behaviour and/or learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Risk	Do you hold concerns for their safety or the safety of others?*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*If you answer 'yes' to question 10, regardless of your response to the other questions, you should immediately report your concern to the person at your school responsible for student wellbeing.

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Level of concern	Very low	Low	Moderate	High
Core features	Optimal wellbeing	Overall positive wellbeing with a few isolated experiences of distress	Occasional and time limited periods of distress with mild impact on wellbeing	Poor mental health and wellbeing causing distress and significantly impacting on daily experiences
Support focus	Maintain	Enhance	Monitor & Internal Support	External Support & Collaboration

What it can look like				
Behaviours, emotions, thoughts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly experiences more positive than negative emotions Manages negative emotions in a healthy way Manages stress and challenges in a productive way Well-developed emotional regulation Understands and utilises personal strengths Healthy lifestyle habits that promote wellness and educational achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays emotional stability, or a range of emotions at a level appropriate to the context or situation Copes with normal stressors of learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluctuations in emotions at times seem disproportionate to event or situation More frequent or intense expression of emotions such as anger, worry or sadness in comparison to peers Reduced expression of emotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent displays of externalising (irritable, low impulse control, anger) or internalising (avoidance, worry, sadness) behaviours Needs things to be perfect; distressed at mistakes Low energy or tiredness Frequently critical of self and others Loss of interest in previously enjoyed topics/activities Constant reassurance seeking Regular complaints of physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, nausea) Excessive or limited appetite; significant change in weight Regression in behaviour
Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested, curious and absorbed in learning Pursues and achieves learning goals with determination Growth mindset when faced with learning challenges Sense of optimism about future learning Engaged in social and emotional learning as appropriate for developmental level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in learning experiences Makes progress within expected parameters Realises own abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some reluctance to try tasks or completes them at a lower level than ability Often distracted, off-task or disengaged Progress is slower than expected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational progress has slowed or declined Avoids completing tasks, or tasks are completed at a much lower standard than expected Regular absences Avoids participating in new learning experiences or group work Significant change in learning outcomes in comparison to their normal level Difficulty paying attention
Social relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains positive and supportive peer relationships Manages conflict effectively Continues developing awareness of and skills for connecting with others Makes valued contributions to others Has established warm and caring meaningful relationships with significant adults underpinned by responsive interactions that support them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has several friendships Interacts appropriately with peers Shows consideration and empathy for others Interacts in warm, caring and responsive meaningful relationships with significant adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has some difficulties getting along with peers (for example, isolates self at times, or refuses to share or take turns) May find it challenging at times when engaging in interactions (e.g. separating from families, entering into peer group, or transitioning between experiences or places) Interacts in warm, caring and responsive meaningful relationships with significant adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular difficulties getting along with peers or joining in Withdrawn from others or socially isolated Bullies others or is bullied by others Interacts in warm, caring and responsive meaningful relationships with significant adults

Use the [BETLS observation tool](http://beyou.edu.au/resources/tools-and-guides) to assist you in gathering information about a child or young person: <http://beyou.edu.au/resources/tools-and-guides>

Note: Infants, toddlers and preschoolers are in a period of rapid development. Their mental health needs to be understood within a developmental framework and in the context of key relationships. Refer to the early learning stream of the Be You Professional Learning for a more comprehensive understanding of early childhood mental health.

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Resources to help with Natural Disaster Preparedness and Recovery.

As Queensland is prone to a variety of Natural Disasters, Esk State School has received support from the Bushfire Response Program led by Beyond Blue in partnership with Early Childhood Australia, headspace and Emerging Minds. The following resources can be used by educators to assist with Natural Disaster preparedness and recovery.

Resource	Purpose	Website
Be You	<p>Be You provides educators with knowledge, resources and strategies for helping children and young people achieve their best possible mental health.</p> <p>The home page has links for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronavirus and Mental Health • Bushfires and Mental Health • Registering with Be You 	https://beyou.edu.au/
Bushfire Resource Pack	Be You has developed a resource pack for schools and early learning services affected by the bushfires. The resource pack focuses on providing information related to mental health and wellbeing for learning communities.	https://beyou.edu.au/bushfire-response-program/resource-pack
Australian Government – Department of Health Bushfire information and support	Learn about smoke and air quality, how you can access the medical help you need, and what the Australian Government is doing to support your health during these devastating times.	https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/emergency-health-management/bushfire-information-and-support
Be You factsheets: Grief, trauma and critical incidents	Contains factsheets for educators that can be downloaded as a pdf. Also has links to webinars and news articles.	https://beyou.edu.au/fact-sheets/grief-trauma-and-critical-incidents
Emerging Minds: Community Trauma Toolkit	Trauma support and guidance for educators, parents and carers.	https://emergingminds.com.au/resources/toolkits/community-trauma-toolkit/
Emerging Minds: Resource Matrix - Educators	Information, activities, lessons and help for educators.	https://d2p3kdr0nr4o3z.cloudfront.net/content/uploads/2019/03/28111558/em-resource-matrix-educators.pdf

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