



EAST PRESTON ISLAMIC COLLEGE

S T U D E N T

E N G A G E M E N T

P O L I C Y

East Preston Islamic College takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures, and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in [Ministerial Order No. 870 \(2015\)](#).

PURPOSE

East Preston Islamic College 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 culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our college acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

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

SCOPE

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

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POLICY

1. College Profile

East Preston Islamic College, first established in 1998, is a K-12 co-curricular school which provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of academic, Islamic, and vocational and training pathways for its students via a comprehensive curriculum. Our students are empowered to learn and achieve their goals here and hereafter, in line with our school motto 'Success here and hereafter.'

We provide a nurturing Islamic environment where students are taught skills to lead and use their voice to enact positive change through a curriculum driven by values taught by the Prophet Muhammad (s). We aim to foster a lifelong love for learning and a pursuit of excellence in education and in life.

2. Child Safe Standards

East Preston Islamic College is a child safe environment in accordance with the Victorian Government Child Safe Standards. East Preston Islamic College activity promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment, in accordance with our legal obligations outlined in the Child Safe Standards. East Preston Islamic College has a Child Safe Policy consistent with the department of education, please see our website for details.

3. Philosophy, Mission, Values and Vision

East Preston Islamic College's philosophy can be best summarised as:

EPIC has a low fee structure so that it is possible for all interested families to attend. The College's aim for our students is to achieve excellence in academic performance and to embrace Islamic values so that our graduates will exemplify the College motto: 'Success Here and Hereafter'.

Our mission is to provide a positive learning environment where staff and students work cooperatively to achieve their best, developing a commitment to continuous learning. The core values of the school are learning, achievement, respect, commitment and fairness.

The vision of the College is to ensure excellence, in both academic and Islamic development, with continuous progress towards producing a new generation of Muslims who are committed, compassionate and hard working citizens, and who are ready to contribute positively and productively to the Australian society.

4. Engagement strategies

East Preston Islamic College has developed a whole school approach to promote wellbeing and engagement for all students across the E.L.C and all year levels. The needs of students vary at times and also change as the students develop and move through the schooling. A summary of the strategies developed aim to assist students socially, emotionally and educationally is included below:

Whole school approach to student wellbeing and engagement

- East Preston Islamic College values highlight safety as core value and the expectations of students, staff and parents to adhere to these values is incorporated into our curriculum and daily processes.
- Processes are in place to celebrate positive behaviours by students in a number of ways including reports, Compass chronicle posts, house points, year level assemblies and awards ceremonies.
- Communication channels have been developed and are used to highlight the important of the schools core values and celebrate positive behaviours by all members of the school

community. These include the school website, newsletter, Compass Newsfeed, Compass Chronicle, award ceremonies.

- Attendance procedures and strategies to effectively monitor, communicate improve student absences and lateness to school.
- Analysis of and response to, student data in a variety of areas including attendance, Attitudes to school surveys, assessments, chronicle posts, detentions, suspensions.
- Delivery of a broad curriculum and pathway options for students including VCE, VCAL, VET and electives programs to ensure students choose subjects that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations.
- Large range of extra-curricular opportunities available to students throughout the school years including:
 - Sport: Sporting opportunities available to every student per term.
 - Arts: Drama, Visual Arts Club
 - Islamic: Imam Club and Quran recitation competitions
- Student opportunities to provide feedback on school decisions. Examples: school captains, Student Representative Council, annual Attitudes to School Survey.
- Year-Level Team are a large investment by the school, with coordinators monitoring and developing the pastoral care of students.
- Access to Student Services Coordinator, school psychologist, school nurse and counsellors for all students via self, family or staff referral processes.

Individual strategies to promote positive behaviour

- Effective data collection through transition and enrolment processes to identify students at risk and in possible need of support at an early stage.
- Monitoring and responding to individual student data such as attendance, Attitudes to school survey.
- Fostering a culture of support and sensitivity to changes in a student circumstances or wellbeing.
- Referral of students of concern to Year Level Team, Student Services Team.
- Student participation in mediations and restorative practices following incidents where relationships have broken down.
- Individual Compass Chronicle documentation of incidents, concerns and referrals to allow tracking of student wellbeing over time.

Bullying & Harassment

East Preston Islamic College has zero tolerance of bullying and of harassment in any form.

The wellbeing of every child at the school is our highest priority. We acknowledge our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety. We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. We are committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments. We recognise that developing a child safe environment is an ongoing process and will not be achieved in the short term. Implementing the Child Safe Standards requires an ongoing commitment. It will not be achieved in one activity or exercise.

We:

- take a whole-school approach focusing on safety and wellbeing
- consistently respond to all incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents
- ensure that support is provided to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- provide regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of incidents
- address cyber bullying as part of our Internet / Social Media Policy

The school encourages all children to speak up when bullying or harassment is encountered.

Advice to students:

- If you see another person being bullied or harassed, tell the person that you saw the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. If your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.
- Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

Aboriginal Students and Students from Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

The school understands that for Aboriginal people, culture is about family networks, Elders and ancestors. It is about relationships, languages, dance, ceremony and heritage. Culture is about spiritual connection to lands and waters. It is the way stories are passed on and knowledge given to babies and children. It is how people are greeted. It is looking for connection. It is about all the parts that bind us together.

The school recognises that creating a physical environment that is respectful of Aboriginal culture is an important first step. Symbols and images that surround a place send an important message about respect. By acknowledging the Country in which the school is located, we are demonstrating our willingness to learn, understand and respond to the diversity of Aboriginal cultures. As part of the policy review process, the school will consider whether or not 'Acknowledgement of Country' should form part of its ceremonies.

The school's Anti-Discrimination Policy describes our commitment to providing teaching and learning environments that are free from discrimination in all forms, including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, ability, disability, sexuality and religion. Anti-discrimination extends to the school's dress code so that children are treated equally with the rights of individual children balanced against the best interests of the school community as a whole when developing and implementing their dress codes.

6. Student rights and responsibilities

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Students have a right to:

- work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition
- participate fully in the school's educational program Students have a responsibility to:
- participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.
- demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.
- as students progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours.
- ensure their child's regular attendance

- engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.
- support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Teachers have a right to:

- expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment
 - be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student
- Teachers have a responsibility to:
- fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy.
 - know how students learn and how to teach them effectively.
 - know the content they teach.
 - know their students.
 - plan and assess for effective learning.
 - create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.
 - use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

7. Student behavioural expectations

Discipline and Behaviour Management

Positive and responsible student behaviour is essential to the smooth running of the school, to the achievement of optimal learning opportunities, and to the development of a supportive and cooperative school environment. Policies and procedures relating to the discipline of students are based on principles of procedural fairness.

Refer to the Student Code of Conduct policy for further detail.

REVIEW

This policy was last updated in January 2021 and is scheduled for review in November 2022.