

# Leadership



Strong school leadership is crucial for improving the wellbeing of the school community. Leaders guide and put into action processes and practices that prioritise wellbeing and mental health. They create a positive environment by promoting trust, cooperation, and respect among staff. This boosts student achievement and school development. Teachers become more dedicated to school policies, including those related to wellbeing. Having a committed wellbeing team is essential. They should have the resources and authority to make decisions and bring about necessary changes.

## Impact

*“High-impact wellbeing leadership is visible, intentional, consistent, inclusive, responsive and sustained and caters for the whole school community.”*

(Smith and Gowing 2021 )

School principals and leaders greatly affect the overall wellbeing of everyone in the school. Their influence is seen in shaping the school’s atmosphere and values, as well as putting the school’s vision and goals into action.

## Practices

- Effective leadership teams strategically integrate wellbeing throughout all facets of the school, encompassing budgeting, policy development, structural organisation, school culture, curriculum design, teaching methodologies, collaboration with families and communities, and the physical surroundings.
- Leadership teams make sure that wellbeing practices cover prevention and offer specific support for students at higher risk. They focus on clear policies, evidence-based methods, and ongoing training for staff, who understand their roles in promoting wellbeing school-wide and in their classrooms.
- Dedicated wellbeing leadership recognises resource limitations, particularly with growing student needs. They understand the balance between immediate crisis response and long-term wellbeing growth, requiring a strategic evaluation of resources to adapt to the changing needs of the school community.
- Introducing a school-wide wellbeing program is like managing a big, long-term change. Focus should be on planning carefully, using good data, and avoiding quick fixes. (Cross and Lester, 2020)

## Resources

Student Wellbeing Hub: Self-paced Online Learning Module: Leadership

<https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/educators/professional-learning-courses/australian-student-wellbeing-framework/leadership/> This module explores leadership, focusing on building understanding, policies and approaches to lead the wellbeing of a whole-school community. The importance of using data to improve outcomes is also highlighted.

AISNSW commissioned this literature review to explore the implementable elements of effective whole-school approaches to student wellbeing. The establishment of a dedicated leadership team to drive implementation is a key finding. [Runions, K.C., Pearce, N., & Cross, D. \(2021\). How Can Schools Support Whole-school Wellbeing? A Review of the Research.](#) Report prepared for the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales.

Education Brief: Learner Wellbeing. This report from Cambridge Assessment International Education outlines theory, considerations and practices to support the leadership of wellbeing in schools.

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/612684-learner-wellbeing.pdf>