



# Hughesdale Primary School

## Student Leadership Policy

Ratified at school Council:  
October 2022

Due for Review:  
October 2026

On Website;  
 Yes  No

Authority (Principal):

Authority (School Council President):

K Williams



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the Business Manager or Assistant Principal.

## PURPOSE

Student leadership opportunities are fostered at Hughesdale Primary School as an integral component of building student voice. It is an opportunity to focus on and foster a range of leadership skills while building the leadership capacity of students. The program extends other leadership initiatives such as the Junior Action Group (JAG), and targets students in their final term of Level 5 and beyond. Skills are developed for all students as they transition through the final stages of their primary education.

## GUIDELINES

While all Level 6 students are seen as school leaders, there are specific roles made available on an annual basis. As there are a limited number of these leadership positions, we are committed to a transparent process that guides student appointment. Wherever possible, the process of selecting specific student leaders is designed to be a positive one, while building student independence and capacity.

To support students to prepare for and select the leadership positions for which they may wish to apply, all Level 5 students will be provided with a student guide in Term 4: *Applying for Leadership Positions* (See Appendix A). The guide is also published on Compass for parent/carer reference. This document includes:

- guidelines for writing an application
- guidelines for public speaking
- descriptions of the leadership roles available
- the step-by step election process
- timeline
- important reading for parents: *5 Tips to Help Children Handle Disappointment*.

## IMPLEMENTATION

To maintain a transparent process and ensure equal opportunity for all students, the following guidelines are also published in the student guide.

### School Captains and Vice Captains

1. Applications are written and submitted by the due date.
2. Applicants are interviewed by a team that includes the Level 6 Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal.
3. The interview team makes a decision.
4. The runners-up will become the Vice School Captains.

### **House Captains**

1. Applications are written and submitted by the due date.
2. All applicants prepare a speech that is delivered to the Level 2 through 5 student members of their house at a special student meeting.
3. Elections are conducted once all speeches have been delivered.
4. Students with the most votes in their House are awarded the position of House Captain for each of the four houses.

### **Specialist Captains**

1. Applications are written and submitted by the due date.
2. Applications will be reviewed by the teachers/staff members who oversee the position that has been applied for (e.g. the Visual Arts teacher will review the applications for Visual Arts Captain, etc.)
3. The teacher/staff member decides on two captains based on the applications and general observations.

## **TIMELINE**

The election timeline is published as part of the guide book.

This is a key document that informs all stakeholders of student leadership deadlines. It will be published annually in Term 4 through Compass and displayed in hard copy in all Level 5 classrooms.

## **COMMUNICATION**

This policy (without the Timeline section of Appendix A) will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- available publicly on our school's website
- made available upon request to the front office.

The Timeline in Appendix A will be updated annually and provided to Level 5 students.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

- *Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy*
- *Applying for Leadership Positions Handbook*

## **POLICY REVIEW**

Policy last reviewed	October 2022
Next scheduled review date	October 2025

## Appendix A

# Applying for Leadership Positions Handbook

It's often said that when you're elected into a leadership position it's your chance to "**step up**", but what does that mean?

Stepping up is a term used in baseball to describe the action of a new batter when they come in to face the pitcher and step up to the plate. It means that it's your chance to face challenges and take action. An important aspect of being a leader at Hughesdale Primary School is that you demonstrate and uphold the Hughesdale Primary School Values of Teamwork, Resilience, Gratitude, Respect and Personal Best.

## **What are leadership skills and how can you develop them?**

Leadership skills are qualities that a person needs to be an effective leader. The main characteristics of a leader are **confidence, organisation, responsibility** and **respect for others**.

### **Confidence**

One of the most important leadership skills is confidence. A leader must have confidence, so they can speak in public and represent their school in the community. Confidence is a behaviour as well as a feeling. When you act in a more confident way, you'll begin to feel it.

### **Organisation**

Remember when you become a leader you need to be ready to take on extra responsibilities. You'll be relied upon by others to get jobs done! This will be easier if you're organised.

### **Responsibility**

Being responsible means being accountable for your actions. It involves making decisions and taking action, rather than waiting to be told what to do. Remember that leadership involves realistic responsibility. There are many things that, as a school leader, are out of your control.

### **Respect for Others**

A big part of being a school leader is to respect others. It's important to listen to what your peers have to say and give them positive feedback on their ideas.

# Writing an Application

Your leadership application is an important document. It communicates your desire to be a leader and outlines what kind of leader you wish to be. It's the starting point of your leadership campaign. It's also your opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills by being organised and responsible for writing and submitting your application (on time).

## **What To Include In Your Application**

### **Why you want to be a leader**

We want to know that you're passionate about leadership and the reasons you're passionate about it.

### **Leadership qualities**

Make sure you write about what a good leader is and how you can fulfil this role.

### **What you can bring to the school**

Leadership is about serving others. So it's very important that you explain what you want to do for the school, and how you will serve the school community and demonstrate the Hughesdale Primary School Values of Team Work, Resilience, Gratitude, Respect and Personal Best.

Remember to be realistic and truthful – there's no point promising an extra day at home each week, because you can't deliver on this promise.

## **Writing Tips:**

- Use the information in this booklet to help you write your application.
- Make sure you draft your application and revise it several times.
- Ask your family and friends to proofread your writing and give feedback.
- Edit your work to ensure your punctuation, grammar and spelling are correct.

# Public Speaking

Public speaking is a skill that every leader should develop strengths in. As a leader, you'll be making speeches all the time. You'll have to speak with confidence, clarity and enthusiasm. You'll normally do most of your public speaking at assembly in front of the whole school.

To become strong in this area you must "act strong".

## How do you "act strong"?

- Adopt a comfortable stance with your feet about shoulder-width apart.
- Make solid eye contact with at least three different people.
- Smile.
- Use a strong, clear voice and strong hand gestures.

## Writing A Speech

Firstly, to make a speech you'll need a topic, whether it's giving out an award or talking about someone or something. Jot down some dot points that you want to include, so you don't forget them. In your plan you'll need:

- an introduction
- a middle( information about the topic)
- an end or conclusion to sum it up nicely).

When writing a speech, you always need to consider the type of audience that will be listening. This has a huge influence on how the speech should be written and performed. You'll need to use appropriate language, so the audience understands your message and what you're saying.

Make sure everything is set out nicely by putting it in order so the speech flows. It doesn't matter if the first draft is messy, as long as you can read it. Once you think you're done, proofread and edit. Check over your work by reading it to yourself, a family member or friend. Ask for feedback to improve your speech.

Once you're happy with your speech, it's time to make speech cards or ensure the font size and lay out is readable. You don't need to write the whole speech down; you can write keywords into dot points so they help you remember. If using speech cards, use neat handwriting and number each card in order.

### **A Really Important Tip;**

The better organised and rehearsed you are with this, the less nervous you will feel at the time of the presentation or speech.

### **Practice**

Practise your speech. Here are some things to think about:

- Eye contact: You need to scan the audience, so that they feel part of it. Making direct eye contact with a few people also can calm your nerves. Glance at your speech cards or iPad but keep your eyes up. This is why keywords work best because they will prompt you if you are stuck.
- Expression: You'll require facial expression as well as voice and body control. When you're speaking, alternate the tone of your voice and emphasise certain phrases and words. Smile at the audience and match your facial expressions to what you're saying. Keep your stance strong and straight: don't slouch, rock, sway or lean on anything.
- Pausing: Don't rush your speech. Pause after a sentence. Take a breath. Say everything slowly and clearly, so it's easier to listen to and calms your nerves. When people are nervous they have a tendency to rush, so make sure you're aware of the pace at which you're speaking.

### **Putting Together a Campaign**

- Your conduct throughout the campaign should be positive. This means focusing on your ideas and how you will help the school.
- You must promote yourself by getting to know your school community and speaking to students of all ages.
- Your campaign is about your long-term passion and ideas for the school. Handing out items to students, or promising items for voting is not in keeping with the spirit of the election, and is therefore prohibited.

# Leadership Roles

## **School Captains and Vice Captains**

The School Captains and Vice Captains are critical members of the Student Leadership Team and represent the school and the entire student body. They're recognised across the school and so have greater accountabilities for all their actions. They're responsible for hosting assemblies, presenting certificates of achievement, making special presentations as well as representing the school in an official capacity.

## **House Captains**

The House Captains are responsible for assisting with sporting events across the school. They're key members of the Student Leadership Team and are therefore involved in assisting in our multi-age days, the running of House Sports Carnivals, and supporting assemblies, along with collecting, calculating, and presenting the house points and helping with other special events.

## **Visual Art Captains**

The Visual Art Captains are responsible for contributing to the artistic direction of school and art competitions, as well as the presentation of awards. The Art Captains also assist in the Art Room to organise materials, choose work for displays and support lunchtime art extra-curricular activities.

## **Performing Arts Captains**

The Performing Arts Captains are responsible for fostering and promoting performing arts throughout the school and thus contribute to the wonderful performance culture that exists within the community. They're responsible for assisting during various choir practices, the Level 6 production, Community Night and extra-curricular activities during lunchtimes.

## **Digital Learning Captains**

The Digital Technologies Captains are responsible for assisting staff with the organisation of technology throughout the school, along with setting up the technology for assemblies, multi-age days, and other special events.

## **Language Captains**

Language Captains are responsible for encouraging a love of language throughout the school. These captains assist the Language teacher to promote both the teaching of language and the celebration of language as a key part of the school's culture.

## **Sport Captains**

Sport Captains at Hughesdale Primary School are responsible for supporting the organisation and running the House Sports Program, making speeches on behalf of the school at external sporting events and presenting back to the school at assemblies. The Sport Captains assist with the running of student-led sporting activities, as well as the management of sporting equipment.

## **Library Captains**

The Library Captains are responsible for supporting the organisation and accessibility of the library and its resources. They achieve this through assisting the Library Technician in the returning of books, organising various resources, assisting with Open Library after school and helping out with literary events such as Book Week.

## **Sustainability Captains**

The Sustainability Captains are responsible for raising awareness within the school to care for the local and global environment. They lead the promotion of different causes and implement programs such as the use of worm bins and composts, to ensure the Hughesdale Primary School environment is well cared for.

## **Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) Captains**

The Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships Captains are responsible for raising awareness of the RRRR program within the school. They can achieve this through promotions at assembly, in the school newsletter and school displays. This is a new role for 2023 which will develop over time.



# Process

## School Captains and Vice School Captains

1. Applicants write and submit applications by the due date.
2. Applicants are interviewed by a team that includes the Level 6 Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal.
3. The interview team makes a decision.
4. The runners-up become the School Vice Captains.

## House Captains

1. Applicants write and submit applications by the due date.
2. All applicants prepare a speech that is delivered to the Level 2-5 student members of their House at a special student meeting. It's a good idea to record your speech in case you are unwell on the day. Leave this recording with your classroom teacher.
3. Elections are conducted once all speeches have been delivered.
4. The applicants in each house with the most votes are awarded the joint positions of House Captain for each of the four houses.

## Specialist Captains

1. Applicants write and submit applications by the due date.
2. Applications will be reviewed by the teachers/staff members who oversee the position that has been applied for (e.g., the Visual Arts teacher will review the applications for Visual Arts Captain, etc.)
3. The teacher/staff member decides on two captains based on the applications and general observations.

## Note

If you wish to apply for more than one captain position, you're required to prepare an application for each.

# Timeline

The election timeline informs the school community of the scheduled events and steps for student leadership applicants. It includes dates for application submissions, interviews and speeches, the election the announcement of the new student leaders.

The timeline will be made available to the school community via Compass. In addition to this, a printed copy of the timeline will be in each Level 5 classroom and discussed with the students.

## **Five Tips to Help Children Handle Disappointment**

When your child faces disappointment, it's normal to share in their pain.

No matter how old your child, they're going to face multiple disappointments throughout their life. These can range from minor letdowns (not getting invited to a classmate's birthday party), to major life events (not being accepted to their top-choice university).

These are part of growing up, and although it's painful to watch our children suffer when things don't go their way, disappointment can actually be good for kids, especially when you teach them how to bounce back so they can cope better for future letdowns.

If children can learn the tools to get over a disappointing situation, they'll be able to rely on them throughout childhood and into adulthood. Below are five tips for helping your kids handle life's setbacks.

### **Tip # 1: Know your role**

As much as we parents would like to do everything in our power to make our kids happy as often as we can, it's just not possible. We do, however, have the important role of helping them *choose* to be happy.

For example, let's say you take your child to a special place like a children's museum that they've been pleading to go to. At the end of a fun, eventful day you ask how they enjoyed the outing, only to hear, "It was okay, but a lot of it was boring." You'll probably be crushed by this flippant comment, but remember: you can't force your excitement about spending quality time together on your child. The key is to not overreact with a hurtful response, but instead ask a specific question such as, "What was your favourite part of the museum?" to encourage your child to see the good parts of the experience.

Modelling appropriate behaviour ourselves when things don't go our way teaches our kids the skills to handle disappointments. It's important to step back and let them use these new skills when things don't go badly, which ultimately allows them to be responsible for their own feelings.

### **Tip #2: Empathise with your child's disappointment**

When your child is hurting from a letdown, begin by acknowledging your child's perception of what happened. Let's say your child doesn't get asked to a birthday party. You certainly don't need to agree with their dramatic conclusion

that they're the most unpopular child in the class. But you can empathise with and reflect their feelings.

Say, "I know you're feeling so hurt about this," then get them to talk. To do that, ask rather than tell. "It's tough that you didn't get asked to the party! I didn't get asked to a party when I was young and I hated how that felt. But several of my friends didn't get asked either, so we had a sleepover at my house and the next day we realised it wasn't the end of the world. What can I do to help you through this?"

This at least opens the lines of communication and shows your child that you've been in a similar situation. Now they know they're not alone. Remember that your child watches how you respond to failures in your own life. It's okay to share your disappointment (as long as you don't overreact) and it's important to show how you learned from the experience.

### **Tip #3: Teach your child self-calming techniques**

In the book *Dealing with Disappointment: Helping Kids Cope When Things Don't Go Their Way*, author Elizabeth Crary recommends that children have one self-calming technique to help deal with disappointment for every year of their age, up to age 12. Crary describes six general categories of self-calming tools: physical, auditory/verbal, visual, creative, self-calming and humour. Here are a few examples of each category:

#### **Physical:**

- Large movements: Examples are running, dancing, jumping, hiking - anything to get their energy out.
- Breathe in calmness: Teach your children to take a big breath and then blow out the birthday candles, or blow a feather across a table.

#### **Auditory/verbal:**

- Talk to someone: Kids need to be heard before they can problem solve. Just listen, uninterrupted and without trying to fix things.
- Positive self-talk: Model this for kids, showing them how even when you're angry, you can productively problem solve. For example, if you didn't get the job you applied for, you could say "I'm sorry that job didn't work out for me, but I'm sure there's an even better opportunity waiting."
- Listen to music: Learn what kind of music your child responds to when happy or when angry. Some families find that having fun, upbeat music

playing in the morning before everyone heads out to school or work helps lighten the mood tremendously.

**Visual:**

- Read a book: This helps give a child focus, calming them. Offering to read a story is a great calming technique.
- Look outside: Looking outside is helpful in detaching from the feelings of disappointment. Depending on the age of your kids, you could play “I Spy” with them.

**Creative:**

- Draw a picture: Have your child draw their feelings. This is particularly good for younger kids.
- Make something: Make brownies, sculpt something out of clay, make a building out of blocks, etc. This helps release restless energy.

**Self-calming:**

- Get a hug: Physical touch is comforting. Learning to ask for a hug when it’s needed is a great coping skill.
- Drink from a water bottle: Make the water “magic calming juice”. This works particularly well for younger kids.
- Take a warm bath: A bath is a great way to help wash away bad or irritating feelings.

**Humour:**

- Read humour books: Laughter can change body chemistry and help us let go of lingering negativity.
- Watch funny videos: Invite your child to watch a funny movie with you. Ask how they feel afterwards.
- Find humour in the situation: This helps teach your child to look at things from a different angle. Let kids see you laugh at yourself.

**Tip #4: Help them find something they’re good at**

One of the most common disappointments children face is feeling like they’re not as good as their peers. Perhaps your child didn’t make the final cut to play on the school soccer team or get invited to join the choir.

Failure can be a blessing in disguise and serve as motivation for children to practice harder, study longer or attempt a different approach. Success isn't always about winning, it's more often about finding another path. Help them find something they can be good at that matches their interests and skills. Or figure out another way to approach the goal that takes advantage of their abilities.

**Tip # 5: Get ready for next time**

Once you help your child through one disappointment, make sure you use the experience to brainstorm ways to fix the next one. If it's a situation such as not earning a role in the school play, you can encourage your child to ask for suggestions from the director on what your child can work on to increase their chances of earning a role in the next production. Help them set some specific, attainable goals for the next audition, and then praise them with great enthusiasm when they finally achieve the role!

It's a good idea to talk to your child about what they can do next. How did they handle their last disappointment? What do they think they should do now? Remind them how good it felt when they bounced back from a past letdown. By arming kids with the experience of success and determination, you're providing the cushion they need to fall back on when disappointment strikes.

Remember that disappointments are not only a part of life, but are also valuable in building the necessary coping skills to succeed in life!

This guidance was adapted from:

<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/parenting/school-age/5-tips-to-help-kids-handle-disappointment>