



# A Positive Education and Visible Wellbeing School



**Ravenswood**  
HENRY STREET, GORDON SYDNEY NSW





Ravenswood's inaugural Eminent Psychologist in Residence, in 2019, Founder of Positive Psychology Professor Martin Seligman

Cover photo: Love RAVO Day 19 February 2020, in support of communities affected by bushfire, drought and hardship.

## Positive Education at Ravenswood

Ravenswood is recognised as one of the leading girls' schools in Positive Education, globally. We were the first school in NSW to implement a Visible Wellbeing approach to Positive Education under the guidance of Professor Lea Waters, Professor and Founding Director of the Positive Psychology Centre, the University of Melbourne and President of the International Positive Psychology Association.

Positive Education at Ravenswood offers a range of empirically validated approaches from the field of Positive Psychology which are delivered through interventions, programs and practices to promote the wellbeing of our students, staff and wider community. Our aim is to embed wellbeing as a cornerstone to enable your daughter to flourish.

We are passionate about excellence in education and helping both our students and staff to fulfil their potential and flourish as learners and people. Our school community understands and acknowledges that learning and wellbeing are inextricably linked, dynamic and personal processes that should be cultivated.

Our Positive Education approach incorporates our explicit curriculum designed to support your daughter to establish optimistic habits of mind that propel her forward in her learning, personal development and character.

Mrs Anne Johnstone - Principal

Complementing our curriculum, our interventions and programs at every level teach the skills of wellbeing to actively cultivate the dispositions of optimism, resilience, grit and compassion for others in our daily interactions. We will help your daughter discover her personal strengths and how to harness them, thereby optimising her educational experiences both within and beyond the classroom.

The Ravenswood Visible Wellbeing program is a new and innovative approach to developing and enhancing student wellbeing beyond the traditional health and wellbeing curriculum delivered in many schools. Visible Wellbeing complements our holistic approach to Positive Education through the integration of innovative teaching practices across key learning areas that are specifically designed to develop the wellbeing of students when immersed in a myriad of learning experiences.

Our Wellbeing Team is led by highly qualified and experienced educators and involves a multi-faceted system of support and guidance provided by staff, Mentors, Year Coordinators and Assistant Year Coordinators, Head of Senior School and our Deputy Principal. Our School Chaplain, Clinical Psychologists, Learning Enrichment Team and Health Care Unit are also available to our girls for support, guidance and advice.



Ravenswood is proud to be named an Innovative School by *The Educator* for work in the areas of Positive Education and STEM.

## Strategic Direction

The Ravenswood model of Positive Education encompasses a holistic approach to wellbeing. In partnership with our students, staff, families and our broader school community, we strive to cultivate and nurture a learning community that enables individuals to thrive.

### Ravenswood Students

Ravenswood students are empowered to learn, make decisions and take responsibility for their own wellbeing. They foster resilience, confidence and optimism in the pursuit of an authentic sense of self.

### Ravenswood Staff

Ravenswood staff are committed to authentic, lifelong learning and flourish as resourceful, innovative, creative and respected educators.

### Ravenswood Families

At Ravenswood there is an authentic school/family partnership that empowers our students to build on their strengths and fulfil their potential.

### Our Vision For Our Community

In years to come our alumni and wider Ravenswood community will become powerful agents of positive change in society.





# Ravenswood

## Guiding Principles

Underpinning the entire Ravenswood Positive Education model, are the school's Guiding Principles and the School motto — *semper ad meliora* - always towards better things.



### Excellence

We value excellence and the fulfillment of our potential within and beyond the classroom in study and play, individually and in teams, at school and in our community, and in local, national and international contexts. We recognise the pathway to personal excellence is paved by grit.



### Courage

We have courage of conviction, confidence to ask the hard questions, to be enquiring of the world, advocate and act independently with resilience in the face of adversity.



### Respect

We are fair minded in our thinking and actions and foster acceptance, tolerance and understanding. We acknowledge and celebrate diversity, because we respect ourselves, others and the world around us.



### Compassion

We are other person centered, giving of our time and energy, our emotions and friendships, and we foster caring thoughtful relationships.

The School Motto — *semper ad meliora* - always towards better things, affirms the School Philosophy for all members of the school community.

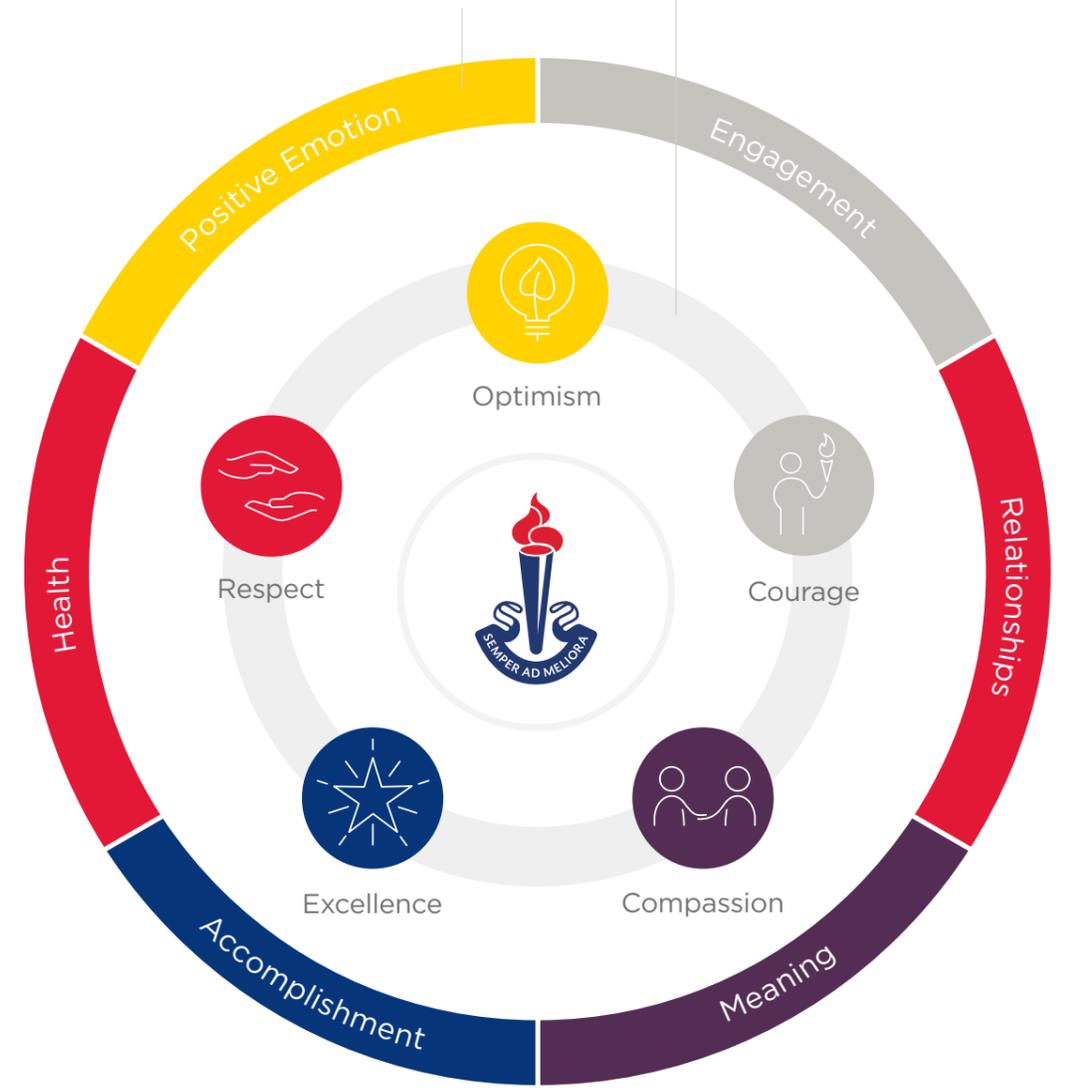


### Optimism

We are purposeful and positive in our outlook on life, believing in and understanding our unique capabilities as individuals and as a country to make a difference to contribute to humanity, to craft our own destiny. Our motto is always towards better things.

## Our Guiding Principles

### PERMA (H) Framework



# PERMA (H) Framework

The PERMA model is a research-based framework for wellbeing that has been created by Professor Martin Seligman, the founder of Positive Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. The PERMA framework identifies five core elements of psychological wellbeing. Ravenswood has adopted a sixth element, Positive Health.



## Positive Emotion

The ability to view the past, present and future with a positive perspective can result in better health, a more creative and productive work performance and improved relationships. When we boost our positive emotions, we increase our enjoyment of everyday tasks and are more likely to persevere and find creative solutions to problems.

## Engagement

We thrive when we are absorbed in what we are doing. We are in flow when we feel time stop and lose ourselves in a situation, task or project. Our interests might be unique to us but we share the need to fulfil our individual potential by engaging in activities that absorb and inspire us. Students who identify their own key strengths gain confidence from consciously engaging in activities that make them feel productive and valuable.

## Relationships

Human beings are social creatures and require good relationships to achieve wellbeing. Like laughter, happiness is contagious and positive relationships lead to shared positive experiences, which in turn increases the number of positive relationships in our lives. Meanwhile, strong networks provide us with support in difficult times and enable us to maintain perspective and balance.

## Meaning

Meaning comes from serving a cause bigger than ourselves and is an important component in attaining wellbeing. Once we have identified what matters most to us, we can start to see a deeper purpose or mission in the work we do and apply our strengths in service of this mission. Connecting to something larger than ourselves can also serve as a protective factor.

## Accomplishment

Establishing goals and striving to accomplish them results in a self-belief that is important for self-esteem and wellbeing. This in turn helps to build resilience in the face of challenges and makes us more likely to work harder and achieve more the next time.

## Positive Health

Physical and mental health are intertwined and the teaching of healthy lifestyles and attitudes is essential for young people, particularly during the adolescent years. Ravenswood's Positive Education curriculum has a focus on the development of the core pillars of positive health, physical activity, nutrition and sleep.

# Ravenswood Positive Psychology Approach and Key Themes

Our work in Positive Education is informed by a range of leading academics and theorists and where possible we have identified specific key influencers in these areas. Academics whose work has been of particular influence has been of Professor Martin Seligman and Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky.



## Mindset

Developing a growth mindset to promote greater levels of self-efficacy, tenacity and build grit. Informed by Professor Carol Dweck's research, students are encouraged to reframe their thinking about learning in terms of 'I haven't mastered this skill, yet' to aid them to develop a growth mindset in the face of challenge.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Carol Dweck*

## Educational Neuroscience

The implementation of effective teaching strategies synthesised from the fields of Neuroscience, Psychology and Education to develop self-regulation and ignite deep learning for improved learning, memory and recall.

## Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

The promotion of critical thinking strategies for both learning and wellbeing helps our students to conceptualise, apply, analyse, synthesise, and evaluate information to be able to solve complex problems and make effective decisions.

## Curiosity, Creativity, Imagination and Innovation

Learning through collaboration provides the opportunity for greater levels of creativity supported by an inquiry-based learning approach. Creativity involves the generation of new ideas that are original and valuable relying on imagination and imagination is the pathway to innovation.

## Broaden and Build Theory

Positive emotions drive our minds to broaden our scope of attention allowing us to become more agile, open and accepting. Such emotions generate an upward spiral of broadening and building that enhances personal growth and flourishing, allowing our students to be the very best versions of themselves.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Barbara Fredrikson*

## Mindfulness and Self-compassion

Learning to combine the skills of mindfulness and self-compassion provides our students with a toolkit for improved emotional resilience enhancing their capacity for improved health and wellbeing.

## Empathy and Forgiveness

The ability to forgive is closely related with the ability to establish empathy for another individual. Developing these skills in our students cultivates and nurtures positive relationships based on honesty, trust and respect.

## Gratitude

Regularly engaging in gratitude and working intentionally as a school community to cultivate an attitude of gratitude can lead to measurable psychological, physical, and interpersonal benefits for all.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Robert Emmons*

## Character Strengths

Discovering and deploying our character strengths and identifying and developing the strengths in others can boost levels of engagement, self-efficacy, resilience, mental and physical health and act as a buffer against the vicissitudes of life.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Martin Seligman and Professor Christopher Peterson*

## Leadership and Service

Service Learning provides immense growth and development opportunities, it also inspires great leadership. At the heart of Ravenswood's Christian ethos is an other-person centred approach and a commitment to making a positive contribution to the community through leadership and service that is meaningful and intentional.

## Self Determination Theory

Self-determination is an important concept that refers to each person's ability experience competence, autonomy and relatedness. The theory devised by Deci and Ryan suggests that students are motivated to grow and change by innate psychological needs; these contributing greatly to improved psychological health and wellbeing.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Edward Deci and Professor Richard Ryan*





### Grit and Deliberate Practice

A key component of grit and more specifically scholarly grit is deliberate practice. Our students learn strategies to set the right 'stretch' goals and harness their strengths to prioritise these. *Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Angela Duckworth*



### Hope Theory and Goal Setting

Identifying, developing and monitoring individual learning and wellbeing goals using the basic principles of hope theory including willpower and waypower, allows our students to maintain the motivation, direction and resources needed to achieve their aspirations while being able to respond with agility when re-goaling is required.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Charles Snyder*



### Active Constructive Responding (ACR)

Our need for social connection is strong, therefore nurturing positive relationships in our lives increases our overall well-being, and paying attention to the ways in which we respond to one another during the good times can strengthen these relationships. Drawing from the work of Shelly Gable, learning the skills of Active Constructive Responding can directly contribute to a young person's wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

*Drawing predominantly from the work of Professor Shelly Gable*



### Emotional Literacy

Developing the skills of emotional literacy allows our students to express their emotional state and communicate their feelings. A student with well-developed emotional literacy is therefore more able to recognise and respond to the emotional states of others promoting a sense of self-awareness and self-worth and greater levels of connection.



### Communication, Collaboration and Negotiation

Supporting our students to learn the key interpersonal skill of effective communication allows for the development of negotiation skills that are enhanced through opportunities that promote collaboration. All of which are essential skills for navigating our increasingly complex world.

### Positive Health – Core Pillars

Eating well, moving frequently and prioritising sleep are the core pillars of positive health. Understanding the importance of these core pillars allows our students to develop the resilience to lean into life fuelled by optimal levels of energy, attention and strength.



# Visible Wellbeing



Visible Wellbeing is an evidence-based approach through teacher practice that develops wellbeing. Ravenswood was the first Visible Wellbeing school in NSW to adopt the approach under the guidance of Professor Lea Waters PhD, University of Melbourne.

#### Evidence-based Model:

- Positive Education – University of Pennsylvania
- Visible Thinking – Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Visible Learning – Melbourne Graduate School of Education



*semper ad meliora*  
always towards better things



*Igniting Potential,  
Inspiring Passion  
& Purpose*

**RAVENSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

A Uniting Church School K-12,

Boarding from Year 7

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