



Australian International School Hong Kong
香港澳洲國際學校



WELLBEING

Updated January 2026

WELLBEING DEFINITION

AISHK strives to create a safe, respectful environment that supports and encourages students. Student and staff wellbeing focuses on a positive sense of self in which people are healthy, resilient and engaged. The ultimate goal is for the community to Connect, Strive and Flourish.

Wellbeing is at the centre of the School's Pastoral Care Program. We believe social and emotional learning capabilities are central to maintaining student wellbeing and for lifelong success.

Explicit social emotional learning lessons are taught through the PROSPER framework in both the Primary and Secondary school. PROSPER is rooted in positive psychology and outlines how wellbeing can be integrated into everyday school life through a set of norms. In the Primary school, PROSPER is made accessible to students via the 'You Can Do it' programme. This programme includes a set of characters through which teachers can tell the PROSPER 'story', bringing learning to life and modelling what PROSPER means to them. In the Secondary school, weekly wellbeing lessons draw on aspects of PROSPER.

Relationships and relationship building is integral to supporting students and staff at AISHK.

COUNSELLING

We have two (2) qualified School Psychologists, one in Primary and one in Secondary. They are always available for student appointments by email to:

Primary (R-6)	Mr Matthew Antinucci	matthew_antinucci@aishk.edu.hk
Secondary (7-12)	Ms Bernadette Spencer	bernadette_spencer@aishk.edu.hk

Students can personally make a time to see the Psychologist, or they can be referred by a teacher or parent.

We encourage students to inform you if they see the Psychologist, but they may not always be comfortable in doing so. Confidentiality is crucial in the counselling process to promote trust and honesty. We guarantee confidentiality to our students, unless we feel that a student is seriously at risk. Parental involvement is often helpful to the student. With the student's permission and whenever possible, we work together with parents. Examples of counselling topics include:

- Relationships with peers, teachers and parents;
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse;
- Stress, depression and anxiety;
- Parent relationships and parental expectations;
- How to study; and
- Approaches to a balanced lifestyle.

These issues are sometimes difficult to discuss with parents but can be addressed with the help of an independent and neutral third party.

NEW STUDENT BUDDY PROGRAM

The AISHK Student Buddy Program is part of the school's practice of promoting positive transition for students entering and leaving the school. The buddy training program and the related manual sets out the responsibilities and expectations for the buddy and the new student.

- All new students entering Secondary are allocated a buddy and the new to school welcoming process is monitored by the Homeroom teacher and Head of Year.
- All new students entering Primary are allocated a buddy and the new to school welcoming process is monitored by the classroom teacher.
- Primary classes buddy program ongoing all year. Older Primary classes are buddied with a younger class and meet at regular periods during the year to establish student relationship and support.

REDUCING BULLYING AND BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

All children and adolescents want to make friends and be a part of a social group at school. Occasionally, there can be social upsets and challenges for students of all ages. Changing friendship networks and finding companions for activities and break time can create stress and upset, but these are not generally examples of bullying. AISHK encourages children to see the difference between bullying and other social conflicts, and to take a resilient approach by being friendly and inclusive at school. Classroom teachers, Heads of Year and the School Psychologists all make themselves available to help students who have concerns about social issues. Serious concerns will be escalated to the school's Executive staff.

At AISHK, we aim to provide a safe and supportive school environment for all students. However, we recognise that all students at some times are involved in social conflict. Bullying occurs in all schools, and we have a range of responses to address this complex social issue. We are committed to being responsive and effective in working with students and parents when bullying occurs.

'Bullying' is defined as repeated, unprovoked and unjustified actions against another person. These may be physical, verbal, social or electronic actions. 'Bullying' involves a misuse of power by a person or group, against an individual who may differ in size, age, verbal ability or social power. AISHK recognises that all children, in different social situations, are capable of taking the role of a bully, bystander, participant or victim.

We know that students of different ages and stages of development are more likely to encounter and engage in various forms of bullying. For example, in young children, physical aggression may be a predominant concern. Pre-adolescent and teenage girls may be more likely to engage in social exclusion activities; while teenagers, generally, are more likely to encounter intimidation associated with various cyber social networking activities.

At AISHK, we:

- Explicitly teach and promote responsible and positive online digital citizenship;
- Encourage students and bystanders to report incidents of intimidation and unkindness to others;
- Work to establish factually what has occurred and identify what needs to be done to rectify the situation;
- Teach additional coping skills and make changes to the environment to lessen the possibility of bullying continuing;
- Expect students to take responsibility for their own behaviour; and
- Inform all parents of students involved in a bullying situation about their child's behaviour.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

At AISHK, we teach skills of assertiveness and resilience, which provide students with some key messages. These are:

- All school members are responsible for putting the AISHK values into action;
- 'Bullying' in any form is unacceptable. There will be consequences for this behaviour;
- Being assertive, supporting friends and being active bystanders helps stop bullies from being powerful; and
- Informing adults at school and at home and asking for support helps break a code of silence about intimidation and harassment.

These messages are conveyed through our:

- Behaviour and welfare policies and rules;
- Wellbeing lessons;
- Buddy programs for new students;
- Safety surveys and student wellbeing surveys;
- Responses to specific bullying incidents; and
- Informal communication with students.

We also have a specific, confidential email system for students to ask for support or to offer information. This email system is called 'safe to talk', and the address is safetotalk@aishk.edu.hk.

ADVICE TO PARENTS ABOUT SOCIAL CONFLICT

- Social conflict is a normal part of life and may not be bullying;
- The School has a responsibility to investigate claims of bullying and establish whether this is the case;
- Try to be objective and remove your emotions from the situation. Deal with facts;
- Be ready to listen to what your child tells you about friendships and social relationships at school. Do not assume that their perspective is the whole story - while their perspective is important, it may need balancing;
- Acknowledge their feelings and ask them what ideas they have to take a step forward from a hard situation. Allowing children to put in place their own solutions for problems is powerful in encouraging independence and feelings of confidence. Take the role of coach, encourage positive action and help refine their ideas;
- Your child will be guided by your reactions. A calm problem-solving approach will encourage the 'can-do' resilience. Encourage your child to think independently and consider what is being caring and considerate of others;
- Communicate with your child's teacher so they are aware of your child's situation. Make a plan with the teacher about what will happen next in following up the concern and establish when you will talk about the issue again;
- If necessary, the teacher will follow up with the student, other students and other staff members such as Heads of Year, School Psychologist, and Head of Secondary or Head of Primary; and
- No single action usually solves these social problems, but many tailored, small moves will create opportunities for students to build positive relationships.

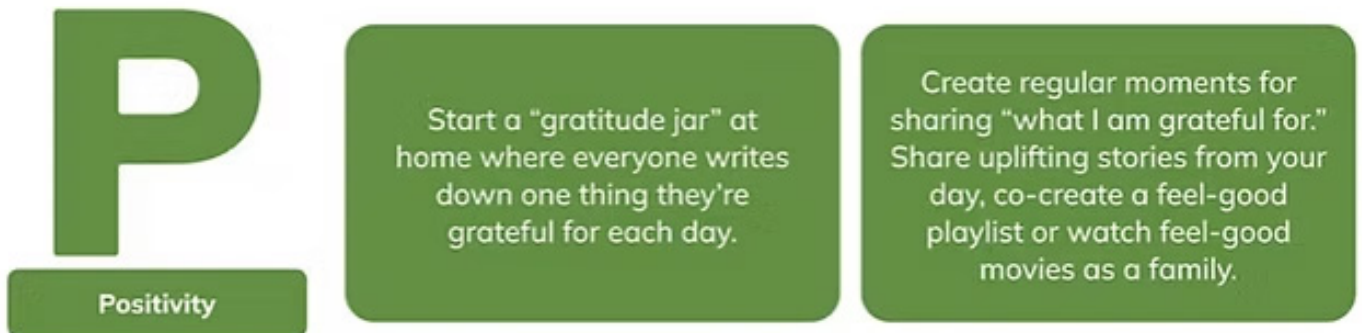
PROSPER

A working group of staff and students conducted a comprehensive review of what wellbeing means to the AISHK community. As a result, an evidence-based framework, PROSPER, anchored in positive psychology, was introduced. Its implementation is a significant milestone as AISHK formally lays the foundation for how we live, learn and grow as a community, using a common language for everyday wellbeing. The PROSPER framework is structured around a set of norms. These norms are integrated into the school's practices and programmes that enhance both wellbeing and academic achievement.

	Me	The ways of working that I bring to each moment.	We	The ways of working we can depend on in this moment.
Positivity	P	I have a Growth Mindset	We	Bring Happy Energy
Relationships	R	I Value Others	We	Build On Our Strengths
Outcomes	O	I look for Opportunities	We	Strive
Strengths	S	I am Empowered	We	Flourish
Purpose	P	I Turn Up	We	Create Opportunities
Engagement	E	I am Present	We	are a Courageous Community
Resilience	R	I am Persistent	We	are Reflective

PROSPER AND POSITIVITY

In 2023 a working group of staff and students conducted a comprehensive review of what wellbeing means to the AISHK community. As a result, an evidence-based framework PROSPER, anchored in positive psychology, was introduced.



PROSPER lays the foundation for how we live, learn and grow as a community, using a common language. We encourage families to incorporate some of the **PROSPER** principles into their daily lives.

Positivity: The Role of Family in Supporting Student Wellbeing

Positivity within a school setting often begins at home. The way families come together to reflect on daily experiences, both the joyful and the challenging, can significantly shape how young people process and grow from their day-to-day lives. Here are a few meaningful ways families can nurture a positive mindset:

1. Guided Family Discussions

Creating space for open conversations, whether around the dinner table, during car rides to activities, or in other distraction-free moments can be incredibly powerful. Celebrating the positive moments of the day helps young people relive and reinforce those experiences. Equally important is the opportunity to talk through challenges. With the support of trusted adults, young people can begin to see difficulties as opportunities for learning and resilience, echoing the principles of Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset.

2. Gratitude Practices

Establishing a daily or weekly gratitude ritual, such as journaling or sharing highlights during family time can help shift focus toward the positive. This simple yet impactful habit encourages young people to notice and appreciate the good in their lives, fostering a more optimistic and grounded outlook.

3. Leisure and Creative Activities

Encouraging participation in creative or physical activities provides essential outlets for expression and stress relief. Whether it's painting, playing music, going for a walk, or engaging in sports, these mindful moments help release endorphins and support emotional wellbeing. Opportunities for letting go of negativity is just as vital as cultivating positivity.

By embedding these practices into daily life, families can play a pivotal role in nurturing a young person's emotional resilience and overall wellbeing, laying a strong foundation for success both in and out of the classroom.

PROSPER AND RELATIONSHIPS

PROSPER lays the foundation for how we live, learn and grow as a community, using a common language. We encourage families to incorporate some of the PROSPER principles into their daily lives.



Relationships: The Role of Family in Supporting the Building of Relationships

Relationships are a big part of growing up and feeling happy. They help children feel safe, loved, and confident. As parents, you can support your child by creating special family time - like playing games, cooking together, or going for walks. These moments help children learn how to connect with others.

Encourage your child to spend time with friends, join clubs, or play team sports. These activities help them practice sharing, listening, and working together. Talk to your child about being kind, saying sorry, and understanding how others feel. These are important skills for building strong friendships.

When children feel supported at home, they are more likely to build healthy relationships at school and in the community. Your time, attention, and encouragement help your child feel connected and cared for—and that's the best foundation for growing strong, positive relationships.

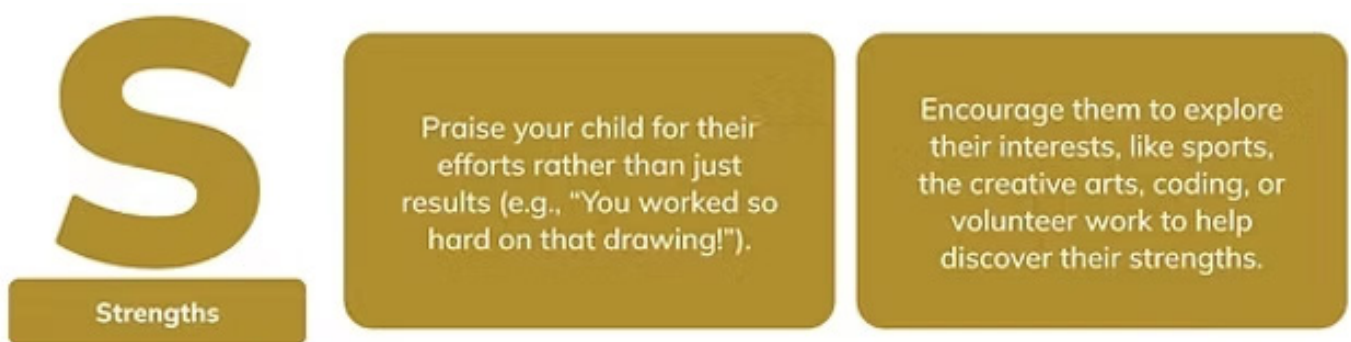
PROSPER AND OUTCOMES

Families play a crucial role in supporting positive outcomes for students, both academically and personally. Here are several key ways families can partner with AISHK to help students establish pathways towards effective outcomes in a variety of areas.



- 1. Goal Setting:** Encourage the young person to have clear objectives and aims in relation to their academics and also other areas of interest. Using the SMART goal approach of Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timebound, helps students to focus themselves toward a positive outcome.
- 2. Establish routines** at home for homework, reading, and sleep. Ensure the young person has a quiet, well-lit space for studying. Establish clear bed times and keep personal devices out of bedroom spaces at night.
- 3. Model positive attitudes** toward the value of the learning process as well as the final outcomes. Helping students to avoid outcome based pressure enables them to more fully commitment to their studies without the overwhelm and stress often associated with outcome driven mindset.
- 4. Feedback:** Encourage young people to engage or seek with feedback in all areas of their life. This can be academics, artistic pursuits or sporting endeavours. Seeing feedback as a path to improvement, and not criticism is an important understanding for young people to develop

PROSPER AND STRENGTHS



Strengths: The Role of Family in Supporting the discovery and exploration of strengths

Every child has unique strengths waiting to be discovered. As parents, you can help your child explore what they're good at by noticing what they enjoy and where they shine. Watch for moments when they're focused, excited, or proud—these are clues to their strengths.

Encourage them to try different activities like drawing, building, reading, sports, or helping others. Give them chances to solve problems, make choices, and take on small responsibilities. Celebrate their efforts, not just their successes, and talk about what they learned. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy most?" or "What was challenging?" This helps them reflect and grow. When children feel supported and confident, they're more likely to keep exploring and developing their abilities. Your encouragement helps them believe in themselves and discover what makes them special.

PROSPER AND PURPOSE



As young people move through their schooling years, they will naturally continue to establish their sense of self identity. As part of this growth, young people look to find and establish their place in local and even global communities.

Families and schools alike, can help support young people during this time in the following ways:

- 1. Encourage self-discovery:** Supporting exploration of hobbies, interests, and passions whether it's art, sports, coding, or community service. This can also include encouraging young people to reflect on what excites them, what they care about, and what impact they want to make in the world.
- 2. Model a purposeful life:** Young people learn by example. Families can demonstrate commitment to meaningful work, volunteering, and personal goals, showing how purpose brings fulfillment. Talk openly about your own values and life choices, helping young people to better understand the connection between personal identity and purpose. Engage in discussions about meaningful topics, like social issues or ethical dilemmas, to encourage critical thinking and values-based decision-making.
- 3. Teach the power of Contribution:** Encourage acts of kindness and the sharing of skills. Supporting school or community events as a leader or a participant creates a sense of belonging and connectedness. Being active in one's own life and saying yes to opportunities presented can help to build self-esteem and self of purpose.

PROSPER AND ENGAGEMENT



Engagement: The Role of Family in Supporting Engagement

Spending quality time with your child or teen helps them feel connected, curious, and confident. One of the best ways to do this is through shared activities that spark interest and joy. For younger children, try hobbies like painting, gardening, baking, or puzzles. Spend time outdoors walking, exploring nature, or playing games together— these moments help build focus, creativity, and calm.

As children grow older, their interests may change, but your involvement still matters. Try cooking meals together, working on DIY or tech projects, or exploring photography, music, or sports. Encourage them to take the lead in planning family outings or learning something new together. Even simple things like watching a movie, going for a hike, or having a chat over coffee can strengthen your bond. These shared experiences help children and teens feel valued, supported, and engaged—building confidence and connection that lasts a lifetime.

PROSPER AND RESILIENCE

In order to ensure young people develop the ability to move forward from negative or disappointing situations, there are a wide variety of character building supports which can be practiced.

Resilience is an important skill to develop at a young age, and is required to successfully navigate negative or disappointing situations. It is used daily as they respond to life's obstacles both big (loss, grief, trauma) and smaller (grade disappointments, time management stresses).



A common example of building resilience begins in families when babies are learning to walk or toddlers take a tumble. They are encouraged to get back up and try again or continue on. As the children grow and move through their school years such support and encouragement continues to be vital in the home.

Families can assist with building and supporting resilience in the following ways:

How to communicate: If the young person is displaying disappointment, and is retreating, try to remain calm and connected. Pre-establish a few key questions to ask which may follow the LEMP conversational model:

- 1. Listen** – Actively hear the young person's concerns, thoughts, and emotions without interrupting. Create a space for them to express themselves fully.
- 2. Empathize** – Show understanding and validate their feelings. Acknowledge their challenges and offer reassurance that they are not alone.
- 3. Make a Plan** – Collaboratively develop actionable steps to address their challenges or reach their goals. Ensure the plan is realistic and achievable and where possible time bound.
- 4. Progress Check-In** – Regularly assess progress, celebrate achievements, and make adjustments if needed. Continuous reflection ensures steady growth and improvement.
- 5. Encourage Healthy Thinking Patterns** - Encourage children to embrace uncertainty rather than resist it. Recognising that unpredictability and change are natural aspects of life, though sometimes challenging. This helps develop adaptability. By shifting their focus to what they can control, young people gain confidence in managing challenges and learn to move forward with resilience.