



# Victorian Principals Association

Unit 2, 13-21 Vale Street, North Melbourne Victoria 3051, Australia

t: (03) 8379 4000 f: (03) 9326 9950 e: [info@vpa.org.au](mailto:info@vpa.org.au) w: [www.vpa.org.au](http://www.vpa.org.au)

## VPA Position Paper

### Primary School Nursing Program - Full Prep Screening

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) is concerned that the practice of full health and wellbeing screenings of **all** Prep students by school nurses in the Primary School Nursing program is not occurring in Primary schools across Victoria.

#### Purpose

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) recognises the importance for each child being able to start school life happy and healthy. The traditional practice in Victoria of having a school nurse check the health and wellbeing of **every** prep student is one that is of great importance for both the individual children, and the wider school community. The recent screening of only selected children who have been identified during the transition process from kindergarten by the teacher or through a Primary School Nursing Program School Entrant Health Questionnaire form filled in by the parent, is of great concern. Up to this year a universal screening process including every prep child was in place. The new system leaves both children and school communities vulnerable.

#### Background to the VPA Position

The VPA position has been determined in the following context:

- Schools are no longer universally able to identify "hidden" issues.
- The new system means that 20 – 25% of students are now not being screened.
- Intervention may be delayed for children who are not identified in the transition from kindergarten.
- Health and wellbeing screenings are a key part of providing a detailed assessment of each child.
- Health and wellbeing screenings are a key element in identifying learning difficulties.

#### VPA Position

- Full health and wellbeing screenings for **every** child by the Primary School Nursing Program need to be implemented across Victoria.
- The screenings need to be complete in semester one of each year.
- Students who have been identified in transition statements or through parent input should receive more detailed screenings.