

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our college community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our college's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Mount Waverley Secondary College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our college acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our college to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all college activities, including camps and excursions.

## POLICY

Mount Waverley Secondary College is an inclusive school. It is a proudly diverse learning community where everyone is empowered to strive for growth and excellence.

The college has a number of important values. These are;



## Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Mount Waverley Secondary College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement and an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our college. The college recognises the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated.

The college has developed and is implementing a Student Wellbeing Model. The Student Wellbeing Model is a whole school framework implemented to support the overall well-being of all students. The four key elements include, Positive Relationships, Social and Emotional Learning, Student Voice and Agency and Partnerships and Support.



A summary of the universal (whole of college), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our college is included below:

### Universal

Mount Waverley Secondary College;

- Has high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Prioritises positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Creates a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate in college life and feel valued.
- Welcomes all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- Analyses and is responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Delivers a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE (including the Vocational Major pathway) to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Teachers at Mount Waverley Secondary College use the college's Explicit Instructional Model, Student Learning Model and Student Wellbeing Model to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons

- Teachers at the college adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- The college's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our college community
- Has carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Ensures that positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in subschool assemblies and communication to parents
- Monitors student attendance and implements attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Provides students with the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Mount Matters program, student leadership teams and representation on College Council. Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Head of School, Subschool Leader, Campus Principal and College Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Creates opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school productions, athletics, interschool sport, music programs and faculty-based programs and activities
- Ensures all students are able to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Mental Health Practitioner or other members of the wellbeing team, Year Level Coordinators, Head of School or Subschool Leader, Campus Principal and College Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning.
- Engages in college wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Safe Schools
- Provides programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- Provides opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, Respect Association, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Has put in place measures to empower the college community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment

### **Targeted**

Mount Waverley Secondary College provides specific programs and strategies to support and assist concerns that may affect some groups of students, age groups and friendship circles.

Strategies and programs implemented in the college include;

- Each year level has two Year Level Coordinators, a subschool leader and the Head of School who are responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support

- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Reconciliation Plan and support from the Wellbeing Team which assist in supporting our Koorie students.
- English as a Second Language (EAL) students are supported through the college's EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in the college
- The college supports learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through extra support in literacy and numeracy, tutors and support from the Wellbeing Team as required
- The college provides a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ+ Student Support. Our Respect Association also provides support for our students.
- All students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- All students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- Wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other college staff each year
- Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: International Student Program
- all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- The college also assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan.

## **Individual**

Mount Waverley Secondary College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parents/carers to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up

- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services
  - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
  - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the college will support the student's family to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers where applicable
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

## 1. Identifying students in need of support

Mount Waverley Secondary College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. The college will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by college staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

## 2. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our college community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents/carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our values are embedded in our college values and vision statement. Our values of RESPECT are;

- Integrity – consistency between words and actions, honesty and trust.
- Learning – Learning is a lifelong skill. Teaching and learning is at the centre of everything we do; catering for all styles of learning and offering a breadth of choice.

- Excellence – Strive to be the best you can be, both individually and as a team. Participating and engaging with our community.
- Accountability – Be accountable for your actions and your words; resolve your differences in a constructive and peaceful way. Contribute to your community, society and to civic life.
- Respect – Show consideration and care for other people, property and self.
- Nurturing – care and compassion for yourself and for others.

Our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents/carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy which is available on the college website.

### **3. Student behavioural expectations and management**

The college has a Student Code of Behaviour that is communicated to students and families through the student planner, information evenings and subschool assemblies. The behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our college's Statement of Values and Student Code of Behaviour.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. The college Bullying Prevention Policy will also be used to manage any bullying issues and incidents.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our college community, Mount Waverley Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other college staff.

Our college considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our

college will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education.

The College Principal of Mount Waverley Secondary College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our college.

#### **4. Engaging with families**

Mount Waverley Secondary College values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents/carers in our college community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents/ carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our policies and procedures which are available on our college website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communication Policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to college activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in college decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

#### **5. Evaluation**

Mount Waverley Secondary College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school-based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Mount Waverley Secondary College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our college community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our college's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included in student planners (for example, the Student Code of Behaviour) so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included as annual reference in college newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from college administration upon request

Our college will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)



The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2022
Consultation	Consultation with the College Council and the Education Sub Committee – 18 August 2022  Parent group via a parent workshop – 30/11/2022
Approved by	College Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024