
Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Mansfield Secondary College on (03) 5775 2022.

Statement of Commitment

Mansfield Secondary College believes every student deserves a safe and positive learning experience where they are engaged and supported to reach their full potential.

The College adheres to the principles of Australian democracy and takes into account the diversity of all children and makes reasonable efforts to accommodate them. This includes (but is not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning (LGBTIQ+) individuals, and children who are vulnerable.

The College is committed to creating a child safe environment protecting children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school 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 school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Mansfield 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 school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

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

Scope

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

Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

Policy

1. School profile

Mansfield Secondary College, is a small, rural Victorian school, close to Mt Buller and the snow fields, which offers a wide range of education and training programs to support our students as they transition into adulthood.

Mansfield community is characterised by people with a constructive and supportive attitude. Tourism and our pristine environment drive our economy, leading to a vibrant community with a strong arts, environment and cultural focus. Mansfield is one of the fastest growing shires in the country.

Our school has students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, leading to a diverse range of student needs and desires. The school prides itself on delivering outcomes across the spectrum from vocational to academic.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school believes that all behaviour is a form of communication. We foster a calm, relationship-based approach that values connection before correction. Every student has the ability to act with respect, and our role is to listen, understand, and support them in finding better ways to communicate. We take a developmental, inclusive approach, recognizing diverse needs

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and contexts. Through restorative practices, we focus on healing harm and promoting growth, equipping students to become thoughtful, respectful individuals.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://mansfieldsc.vic.edu.au/statement-of-values-school-philosophy-policy-2/>

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Mansfield Secondary College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

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

Universal (Tier 1)

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data, school level assessment data and other data sets
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, structured workplace learning (SWL) School-based apprenticeships and training (SBATs), VCE, Vocational Major (VCE-VM) and Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Mansfield Secondary College use High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) and a common instructional framework to ensure an explicit and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Mansfield Secondary College use High Impact Wellbeing Strategies and the Berry Street Educational Model, utilising trauma-informed practices to ensure students feel safe, supported, and empowered to engage in their learning.

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- teachers at Mansfield Secondary College adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to diverse learners, address the strengths and needs of all of our students, and foster inclusive learning environments that align with the professional standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school'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 school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their educational experiences and develop as engaged lifelong learners.
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement strategies to boost attendance and engagement at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and other student voice opportunities. Students are also encouraged to speak with their student representative including captains, teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through creative arts, music, sport, and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to reach out to the Wellbeing Team if they need additional support or would like to discuss a particular issue/experience. The team provides a safe, confidential space to listen, guide, and support students in navigating any challenges they may face.
- all students are welcome to reach out to their Year Level Coordinators and school leadership, 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 and engagement
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Berry Street Educational Model
 - Respectful Relationships
 - School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
 - Wellio
 - Safe Schools
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- educate our school community to be upstanders by identifying, reporting and addressing inappropriate and harmful behaviours, such as racism, homophobia and other forms of

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discrimination or harassment. We are committed to fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and compassion, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued in the process of promoting a positive and inclusive community.

Targeted (Tier 2)

- each year group has a Year Level Coordinator, a senior teacher 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 with support from the Koorie Education Officer and Inclusive Education Team.
- our English as a second language students are supported through a range of programs including our EAL program and the Virtual New Arrivals Program (VNAP), with support from the English as a Second Language Coordinator and Inclusive Education Team. All cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through utilising culturally responsive pedagogies and strategies.
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through a range of supports which is collaboratively created within the individual context including the students, parents/guardians, community, staff, speech and language specialists, English as a Second Language Coordinator, and the Inclusive Education Team.
- we provide a positive and respectful environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQA+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#). This includes working collaboratively with other organisations and the local community to offer a range of programs and events to celebrate the diversity of our young people.
- 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 Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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
- the wellbeing team will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students, supported by whole school professional development from Berry Street Education Model.

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- 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
- Mansfield Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Individual (Tier 3)

Mansfield Secondary College implements a range of evidence-based, student-specific engagement strategies that support and promote individual engagement, consistent attendance at school and optimal social, emotional and physical wellbeing. These interventions are considered and applied on a case by case basis, and can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school and being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances, health and wellbeing
- establishing a Student Support Group to discuss and formulate goals and strategies that aim to support the student
- developing an [Individual Education Plan](#), [Behaviour Support Plan](#), [Attendance Improvement Plan](#) and/or Safety and Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- applying for individual (Tier 3) funding for students who meet eligibility criteria through the [Disability Inclusion](#) Program
- utilising the [Mental health toolkit](#) and the [Mental Health Menu](#) to strengthen and increase mental health support
- referring the student to:
 - MSC student wellbeing team, consisting of a mental health practitioner, adolescent health nurse, student wellbeing officers and student wellbeing coordinator
 - MSC Inclusive Practice team, including learning specialists and leading teachers, allied health practitioners such as speech pathologists
 - Department programs and supports such as [Student Support Services](#), Koorie Education Support Officers, [LOOKOUT Education Support Centre](#), [Inclusion Outreach Coaching](#)
 - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, [headspace](#), child and adolescent mental health services or The Orange Door

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- Re-engagement programs such as [Navigator](#)
- Continuing to work with the student, their family and any external allied health professionals, services or agencies to best support the needs of the student.
- Consideration of other individual adjustments to the students programming at school such as:
 - Hands on Learning program
 - Life Skills alternative programs
 - Additional work experiences including structured workplace learning
 - Modified or reduced timetables
 - Access to alternative, supported learning environments

4. Identifying students in need of support

Mansfield 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Mansfield Secondary 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
- Student support group (SSG) meetings
- academic performance
- wellbeing check-in surveys
- observations by school 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

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

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Students have the right to:

- Feel safe, secure and happy at school
- Be treated fairly and respectfully by all members of the school community in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- Be able to fully participate in their education in a way that recognises and values their unique learning characteristics
- Be shown unconditional positive regard that maintains high expectations in all areas of their schooling
- Be known, listened to and valued, and have agency in their learning

Student Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to play a vital role in nurturing a learning environment that promotes their own and others' wellbeing by:

- Participating fully in their educational program.
- Displaying positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community.
- Respecting the right of others to learn.
- Actively engaging in developing their understanding of wellbeing, including self-regulation, emotional awareness, and effective management strategies.
- Recognising and respecting that approaches to wellbeing and self-regulation may differ among individuals, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment.
- Seeking support proactively and applying strategies as needed to contribute to a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy (see policy).

The behavioural expectations of our students are guided by our commitment to understanding that each situation is unique, shaped by individual circumstances and context. We place great

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value on the expertise and insights of our staff, who are integral in fostering a supportive and respectful environment. Our approach is grounded in respect for all individuals, recognizing the importance of maintaining dignity in every interaction. In line with our trauma-informed philosophy, we strive to understand the underlying factors contributing to behaviours and use these moments as opportunities to support growth and learning.

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. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student's behaviour does not align with the standards of our school community, we apply a staged, trauma-informed approach that seeks to understand the underlying functions of the behaviour. We prioritise supportive, restorative strategies that address students' needs and encourage positive growth, using non-punitive interventions as a first step. By considering the experiences and perspectives that may drive behaviour, we aim to create a safe, empathetic environment where disciplinary measures, such as detention, withdrawal of privileges, or removal from class, are only considered when all supportive options have been explored.

We will partner with parents and guardians to support positive student engagement and, where appropriate, inform them of behaviours and actions taken in line with Department policies on behaviour, discipline, and wellbeing.

Our school uses a range of proactive and responsive strategies to promote and support positive student behaviour. We implement consistent, school-wide staged responses in alignment with teacher judgment, as outlined in Section 3.

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 and Training.

The Principal of Mansfield 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 school.

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7. Engaging with families

Mansfield 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 and carers in our school community.

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

- partnering with families in a culturally responsive and inclusive manner to learn, understand and implement strategies that best support each learner's unique needs and strengths.
- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, particularly through COMPASS and parent-teacher-student conferences
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Mansfield 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

We 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 school community in the following ways:

Ratified by School Council: November 2024

Next Review Date: November 2026

Approved by: Kate Stonnill (School Council President), Timothy Hall (Principal)

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- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Periodically referenced in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer 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 and Training 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	November 2024
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Consultation	Draft policy was developed by the wellbeing team, drawing in consultation with staff and students.
Approved by	Principal & School Council
Next scheduled review date	November 2026