

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

1. Summary

Table 1 - Document details

Publication date	June 2019
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Related legislation/applicable section of legislation	
Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	RSC's Bullying Prevention policy.
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2. 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) what support is available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour

Rowville 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 helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

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.

3. Scope

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

4. Policy

4.1 School profile

Rowville Secondary College was established in 1990 and is located approximately 40 kilometres east of Melbourne. We have 1821 students enrolled from Year 7 to 12, across two campuses. The original campus, later referred to as "The Western Campus", caters to students in years 7 to 12 in our General Excellence program, as well as being home to our Maths and Science Academy (MSA). The Eastern Campus opened in 1996 and now caters to our Sports Academy (RSA) and Institute of Arts (RIA) students in years 7-12.

The College is surrounded by a supportive community as developing partnerships with local community groups and businesses has been a high priority. While local Rowville students make up a significant proportion of the total enrolment a large group of students live out of the area travel and travel by either public transport or car to school.

The college has only a relatively small percentage of students with a background other than English with Chinese (Mandarin) and Persian to the largest groups.

Rowville Secondary College aims to provide the highest quality education to all our students. Our mission is to equip each student with the skills needed to successfully live and work in Australian society. Positive attitudes to learning leading to excellence in outcomes will come from vibrant, challenging and exciting programs. The College staff work closely with parents and the community to ensure that these goals are achieved.

4.2 School values, philosophy and vision

Rowville Secondary College's vision – We will be exemplary in our passion for learning with high expectations for achievement and a dedication to providing for diversity of talent and interest. We strive to see students leave Rowville Secondary College confident, happy and ready for success in a changing world.

Rowville Secondary College's values –

- Respect – Act as you would like to be treated
- Responsibility – Brave enough to play your part
- Excellence – Nothing but your best
- Community – We're all in this together

4.3 Engagement strategies

Our strengths-based approach to education values diversity and uses students' passions to motivate individuals to be the very best learners and the finest people they can be. We launched 'Curiosity and Powerful Learning' in 2016 which supports this approach and has been very successful.

The goal of 'Curiosity and Powerful Learning' is that all Rowville Secondary College students will be literate, numerate and curious. As powerful learners, students need the ability to respond successfully to the tasks that are set and the tasks they set themselves.

Teachers have invested in a clear set of values and professional learning process that informs what we do every day, for every child in every classroom.

Tasks that students are set and the tasks they set themselves include the capacity to:

- Integrate prior knowledge
- Acquire and apply a range of learning skills
- Solve problems individually and in groups
- Think carefully about their successes and failures, and learn from both
- Evaluate conflicting evidence
- Think critically
- Accept that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty

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

Universal

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise authentic 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
- 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 and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE, VCAL and SBAT to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Rowville Secondary College use a Learning Framework 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 Rowville Secondary 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

- our school's Statement of Values 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 schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through Student Leadership and other forums including house meetings, Learning Mentor session and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Learning Mentor, Head of House, Dean of Students, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs, peer support programs and the House system structure
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Head of House, Dean of Students, Assistant Principal and 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
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support strategies with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Berry Street Education Model
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. cyber safety)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peer support programs

Targeted

- each student has a Learning Mentor, a teacher responsible for their Learning Mentor group, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their group, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- all students from Year 8 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- refugee and Asylum Seeker wellbeing and support program
- all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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 school staff each year

- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Lookout

Rowville Secondary College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement including:

- building authentic 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
- 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

Where necessary the school 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 Support Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4.4 Identifying students in need of support

Rowville Secondary College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Learning Mentors, Heads of House, Deans of Students and Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Rowville 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
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, community service and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- referrals to Career Pathway Coordinators

4.5 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.

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, 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 or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

4.6 Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's four core values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Rowville Secondary College's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Rowville Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff. 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 school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Rowville Secondary College 5R behaviour management process (refocus, remind, reengage, removal, restorative)
- 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 Head of House
- restorative practices
- community service sessions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

4.7 Engaging with families

Rowville 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, guardians and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website and/or Compass
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff, supported by the use of Compass, SILT and Student-Led Conferences and the Learning Mentor and House System
- providing parent/carer volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and review

Rowville 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
- SOCS

6. Further information and resources

<https://rowvillesc-vic.compass.education/Communicate/SchoolDocumentation.aspx>

<https://www.rowvillesc.vic.edu.au/>