

# Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the general office or speak with your Coordinator

## 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.

St Albans 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 and maximise learning for all students.

## SCOPE

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

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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

St Albans Secondary College is a 7 - 12 co-educational school located 18 km to the northwest of central Melbourne. The College is proud of its history as the original secondary school in the area, and of its continuing role as an educational focal point within the community of St Albans and surrounding suburbs.

St Albans Secondary College is built on Aboriginal land. The traditional owners of this land are the Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) and Boonwurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. We are proud to teach a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at our school in partnership with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait families.

Our College has welcomed new arrivals to Australia since its establishment in 1956, and this is reflected in the culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds of our students, as well as in the multicultural vitality of our community. The vast majority of our students come from non-English speaking backgrounds, covering over 50 different nationalities. We are proud of our diversity and of our inclusive school community.

The student enrolment is currently 1600+. Consistently strong enrolment figures allow the school to maintain flexibility in both staffing & curriculum, and, thus, to effectively address the educational directions valued by the whole school community.

Our school is committed to fostering the academic, social and personal development of each student, to guaranteeing high quality teaching and learning in every classroom, and providing a broad range of programs to challenge and enrich all students. We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best.

## 2. School vision, values and philosophy

St Albans Secondary College's vision, values and philosophy are integral to the work that we do and are the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live by and demonstrate our core values, at every opportunity.

### College Vision

St Albans Secondary College is dedicated to providing an environment that values excellence and is respectful of all members of the community. Our goal is to inspire each individual to achieve their potential and to take their place with confidence in our changing society.

### College Values

LEADERSHIP, EXCELLENCE, INTEGRITY AND RESPECT

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <http://stalbanssc.vic.edu.au/our-college/our-vision-values/>

### Vision for Wellbeing

Our vision for wellbeing is to support all members of our school community to develop a resilient mindset by striving to ensure everyone feels **Connected**, **Protected** and **Respected**. This philosophy is underpinned by the following guiding principles

- Resilience is key to staff and student wellbeing and is essential to ensure **EXCELLENCE** for all staff and students
- **LEADING** a culture of resilience where everyone feels connected, protected and respected is a fundamental aspect of everyone's core business. This involves **RESPECTING** diversity, celebrating difference, and demonstrating positive regard for each other

- Student wellbeing is maximised when we teach with *EXCELLENCE*. This means we are all committed to using our teaching and learning framework to create a safe, orderly classroom with a stimulated learning environment, where every student is engaged and challenged
- We have a collective responsibility (personal *INTEGRITY*) to all work towards building resilient mindsets in ourselves, our colleagues, our students and our peers
- We are committed to student voice and staff engagement in order to increase the impact of teaching and learning, maximise support and mutual *RESPECT* for all members of our school community, and to implement suggestions and innovation
- Collaboration is a key aspect of growing and maintaining a culture of resilience and *RESPECT*. Staff and students who work together and support each other feel more **Connected, Protected and Respected**.

### 3. Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

St Albans 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 and to promote equity and excellence for all. We achieve this through fostering engagement, positive behaviour, respectful relationships and by supporting the development of resilient mindsets for all members of our school community. 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. What creates resilience varies at different stages of our lives. The clear indication is that people thrive when they:

- Connect with one another
- Protect one another
- Respect one another

A summary of the whole of school, targeted and individual engagement and wellbeing strategies used by our school is included below.

#### Whole of school

- Ensure high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers that support the College vision for wellbeing to ensure all students are connected, protected and respected
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- Create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- Promote a culture of wellbeing at the college and explicitly teaching students strategies to foster self care and develop a resilient mindset
- Teachers at St Albans Secondary College use the LATAR instructional 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
- Deliver a broad, guaranteed and viable curriculum including VCE, VCAL and VET programs, to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Partner with parents/carers and be welcoming and responsive to them as partners in learning

- Teachers at St Albans Secondary College adopt a broad range of differentiated 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
- Analyse and be 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
- Incorporate our school's vision, values and philosophy into our curriculum and promote it to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- Carefully plan transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Assist all students to develop a Career Action Plan, and career with advice with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.
- Provide study support and skill development for all students through the Learning Manager Program and external providers e.g. Elevate
- Acknowledge positive behaviour and student achievement 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
- Privilege student voice and agency through a formal school leadership program, student forums, the Student Learning Action Team, and through students setting learning goals in the classroom. Ensure students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council, class meetings and other forums
- Encourage students to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- Create opportunities for cross age connections amongst students through school productions (MAC), athletics, music programs, peer support programs and a wide range of extra curricula activities
- Provide all students with access to a Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Year Level Coordinators, 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.
- Engage in proactive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Safe Schools
  - Restorative Practices
- Provide opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities and participating in the school camps program) supported by a robust House program
- Utilise buddy programs, peers support programs to help students feel connected at the College

## Targeted

- Each student has a Year Level Coordinator responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Targeted literacy and numeracy intervention programs such as:
  - Literate Practices
  - Language Enrichment program
  - SPELD program
  - Middle years literacy and numeracy support (MYLNS) initiative
  - Whole school literacy program
- 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
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our English as an Additional Language (EAL) program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds through the Wellbeing Team and Sub School support
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- 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 and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Young carers are supported by their Coordinators in a way that best meets their needs and in accordance with DET policy.
- 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
- We provide organisational and learning support to students through the Individual Needs Team
- Wellbeing and allied 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
- 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
- St Albans Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- A suite of proactive programs is developed and reviewed each year to address specific wellbeing, engagement and behavioural concerns for identified areas of need.

## Individual

St Albans Secondary College implements a range of strategies that supports and promotes individual engagement. These can include:

- Building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- Meeting with the student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help them engage with school
- Developing an Individual Learning Plan as required
- Developing a Behaviour Support plan and/or a Self-Regulation plan with students who require intensive support in regulating behaviours in the classroom in accordance with the Student Management Policy
- 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 (CAMS), ChildFirst or Orygen
  - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator
- Student Support Groups, see: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy>
- Program for Students with Disabilities managed by the Individual Needs Team
- Liaising with Lookout to support young people in residential care

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 Improvement Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- Engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- 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.

## **4. Identifying students in need of support**

The Student Wellbeing Team, Sub School teams and the Individual Needs team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies which help identify students in need of support and enhancing student wellbeing. St Albans 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, 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, supportive and productive 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.

- All students have the right and responsibility to learn;
- All students have the right to feel comfortable & safe, and the responsibility to contribute to the comfort & safety of others;
- All students have a responsibility to develop empathy for the wellbeing of others.

### **All students have the right to learn**

Therefore all students have the right to:

- learn as much as possible and participate fully in their education program ;
- have all work expectations clearly explained to them;
- receive regular feedback about their progress;
- have a curriculum that is meaningful and appropriate, whilst also being challenging and promoting high expectations;

And all students have a personal and communal responsibility to:

- take full advantage of learning opportunities in order to strive for personal excellence;
- behave in a way that allows others to learn and work effectively;
- respect the right of others to learn, and
- encourage others to behave appropriately and to work hard.

### **All students have the right to feel secure and happy at school**

Therefore students have the right to:

- be emotionally and physically safe;
- be valued as individuals, and treated justly and fairly at all times;
- learn in an safe, orderly environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

And all students have a personal and communal responsibility to:

- be aware of, and to follow, College policies and procedures;
- obey all reasonable requests of staff members;
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community

- contribute to school-based decisions through an active participation in student forums, leadership activities and peer representation roles.

### **All students have a responsibility to develop empathy for the wellbeing of others**

Therefore students have a personal and communal responsibility to:

- to treat, and encourage others to treat, all members of the College community fairly and with respect;
- respect and encourage others to respect both personal and college property;
- accept and encourage others to accept differences in the cultural backgrounds, opinions, gender, sexual diversity and attitudes of others.

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 and management**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and Student Management Policy.

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 and our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, St Albans Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the College's Student Management Policy and 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 utilising restorative practices as appropriate. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary and/or restorative 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
- Behaviour monitoring and support/regulation plans
- Mediation or restorative conferences
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- Student and parent teacher conferences
- Detentions



- Behaviour reviews
- 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 and Training.

The Principal of St Albans 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.

More detail is available in the College [Student Management Policy](#) which can be accessed on the College Website.

## 7. Engaging with families

St Albans 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:

- 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
- Providing parent 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.

## 8. Evaluation

St Albans 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
- Incident data
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case management
- CASES21

St Albans 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 school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website and Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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:

- Student Management Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- [Statement of Values](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2022
Consultation	School Council School Improvement Team - Wellbeing Student Wellbeing Committee Staff
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024