



# Sunbury College Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Sunbury College on 9744 1066

## 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.

Sunbury 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.

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.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Sunbury College was established in 1962 and is located in the outer northwest of metro Melbourne. The student enrolment sits around 1000, most of the student population has English as the primary language, with a small percentage speaking a language other than English at home. 2% of students identify as Aboriginal and/or

Torres Strait Islander. Our school grounds are 8 hectares in size and include three sporting ovals, tennis and basketball courts, a gymnasium, and various technology and arts facilities.

The staff is a combination of experienced and early careers teachers, and education support staff who are committed, professional and collaborative. At Sunbury College we value continuous improvement and development.

A comprehensive curriculum is offered from Years 7-12, including VET options, and the College is organised around three sub schools (Years 7-8, 9-10, 11-12). Sunbury College has well established co-curricular programs with high interest and success in sport, the performing arts, student leadership and student engagement activities.

Our strategic directions going forward have a strong emphasis on pedagogical development and on agency and voice in students' learning. In the area of student pathways and transition the college aims to provide a post compulsory program, counselling and advice that maximises the further education, training and employment options for all students. As part of its focus on student engagement and wellbeing, the College provides a supportive and productive learning environment supported by positive student and teacher relationships that promote overall wellbeing through the development of engaged, motivated learners with a strong sense of connection to the school community.

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

Sunbury College's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Sunbury College envisions our students as engaged learners and independent thinkers that are met at their point of need as partners in their learning. At Sunbury College education matters, emotional, social and physical wellbeing is nurtured, and pathways for all students are maximised.

Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, responsibility, resilience and endeavour at every opportunity.

*Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available online at:*

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

## **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Sunbury 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**

- 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 and school level assessment data
- teachers at Sunbury College use a flexible teaching and learning framework and our instructional model GENAR 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 Sunbury 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
- 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 award ceremonies and communication to parents/carers
- 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 the Student Leadership team and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinators, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school productions, sports, STEM and music programs, and proactive programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Inclusion and Wellbeing team, Year Level Coordinators, Sub School Leaders, 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 with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Consent education
  - Safe Schools
  - Pastoral Care
  - Learning Program for Year 7 students (LP 7)
- opportunities for student inclusion and wellbeing (sports teams, clubs, brunch and lunchtime activities)
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

### **Targeted**

- each year group has a sub school team including a Leading Teacher, Year Level Coordinator(s), Youth Worker, and a team assistant 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, and are supported by our Koorie Education Coordinator, sub school teams, and Inclusion and Wellbeing team
- our English as a second language students are supported through small EAL lessons, our 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 background through the Inclusion and Wellbeing and sub school teams
- 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 (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 Inclusion and Wellbeing and sub school teams 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
- a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma is applied
- all students from Year 7 and above are supported to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- Sunbury College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, Structured Work Place Learning placements as part of the VCE VM program

### **Individual**

- 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 through a [Student Support Group](#)
- developing [Individual Education Plans](#) and/or [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- 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 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 Officer (KESO)
- 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

Sunbury College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally, and socially. The Inclusion and Wellbeing, and sub school teams play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Sunbury 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
- Work Habit Ratings
- 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
- homework club or other extracurricular activities

#### 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 College [Statement of Values](#) highlights the rights and responsibilities of all 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 concern or complaint 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 concern or complaint is available in our [college website](#).

#### 6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Sunbury College has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations outline what is expected and appropriate behaviours for our school community. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities, and experiences.

Sunbury College follows a Restorative Practice model in dealing with student management issues. By addressing the issue and restoring a positive relationship, students are supported to move forward with learning.

Behavioural expectations of students, staff, and parents/carers are grounded in our Statement of Values and outlined in our [statement of behaviours](#) that informs the way we live our values within and beyond the College.

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 acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Sunbury College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. 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:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- reminding and reteaching students expected behaviours
- teacher managed consequences such as relocating a student within the classroom, removing students from the classroom, teacher detentions, or other reasonable and proportionate responses to inappropriate behaviour that impacts the learning environment
- withdrawal of privileges
- mediation
- communication contracts and/or safety plans
- restorative practices
- detentions
- parent/carer meetings
- 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 Principal of Sunbury 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.

## 7. Engaging with families

Sunbury 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 the College website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
- 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.

## 8. Evaluation

Sunbury 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
- Student Online Case System (SOCS)

Sunbury 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
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference 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 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](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

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

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

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Policy last reviewed</b>       | October 2025                |
| <b>Consultation</b>               | School Council (March 2026) |
| <b>Approved by</b>                | Principal                   |
| <b>Next scheduled review date</b> | March 2028                  |