



# 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 on 9091 8100 and select Option 3.

## 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.

Maribyrnong 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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## POLICY

1. School profile

Maribyrnong College provides a broad education for 1280 students in Years 7-12. It is the only Victorian state funded Sports Specialism School with a sports enrolment comprising approximately 40% of the school population. The remainder of the student cohort live locally.

The school has 108 teaching staff and approximately 100 education support staff. This includes numerous sporting coaches.

The College provides a broad VCE curriculum and the majority of students undertake further study after Year 12. The school's International Students Program supports 14 international students, predominantly in Years 10-12. Additionally, the College provides an EAL program to support students of non-English speaking backgrounds. Student attendance at the College is very high. Where required, individual students are case managed and supported by the Student Wellbeing Team. All Koorie, Out of Home Care and PSD students have individual learning plans and parent support group meetings are held regularly. Teachers are provided with ongoing professional learning in the development of modified and differentiated curriculum.

Maribyrnong College delivers programs that produce excellent outcomes for students in both academic and sporting endeavours and this is aptly described in the school motto: "Pride in Performance". A high achievers program operates at Years 7-9. Year 10 students can access a range of VCE subjects. A rich extra-curricular program includes instrumental music and drama, a school production and a strong inter-school sport program, The College has a strong student leadership program at all year levels.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our College motto is 'Pride in Performance' and this defines our purpose. At Maribyrnong College we promote a high performance culture in which staff, students and parents have high expectations of themselves and others. We want all members of our school community to be proud of their performance and of their achievements.

Our Statement of Values is available online within the Parent Handbook available on the College website.

## 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Maribyrnong College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. 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
- 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 VCE, VCE Vocational Major and program provision for emerging athletes to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Maribyrnong College ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into lessons
- teachers at Maribyrnong 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 philosophy of Pride in Performance is 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 decisions about school operations through the Student Leadership Teams. 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 plays, athletics, debating, leadership camps and music programs.
- *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.*
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Program Managers and 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
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Project Rockit
  - Consent Education
  - Tomorrow Man/Woman
- opportunities for student inclusion (TOM, Debating and Public Speaking, Production, Duke of Ed, Alpine School, Leadership initiatives)

### Targeted

- each year group has a Program Manager, a leading teacher, responsible for their year level, who will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support and develop and manage a Personal Learning Program
- all students in Year 9 complete the Morrisby Program
- all students in Year 9 undertake a term long Connect 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
- Maribyrnong College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- 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 additional language students are supported through our EAL program through separate EAL classes, EAL strategies across the curriculum, a support space for International Students and a full time International Students/Home Stay Coordinator*
- *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 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*
- *we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through whole staff training in trauma informed classrooms, access to Mental health Practitioner and focussing on recovery goals*
- *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](#)*
- 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
- Individual Learning Plans and Behaviour Support Plans
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Student Support Services

- referral to ChildFirst, Orange Door, WestCasa, Headspace, Orygen, CAMHS and other allied services
- Navigator
- Lookout
- Operation Newstart
- Mental Health Toolkit

Maribyrnong College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These 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
- developing an Individual Education 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
  - Visiting Teacher Service
  - 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 Maribyrnong 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, developing flexible learning plans and Attendance Improvement Plans 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
  - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

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

Maribyrnong 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. Maribyrnong 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, including 5 weekly reports
- 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
- referrals from parents/carers
- referrals from coaches
- external clinical and allied health services

## 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.

<b>Students have the right to:</b>	<b>Students have the responsibility to:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate fully in their education</li> <li>• learn and develop their potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate fully in their educational program</li> <li>• to work to one's personal best and allow others to work at their personal best</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• express their ideas, feelings and concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect the opinions of others and encourage all class members to be involved in class discussions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feel safe, secure and happy at school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be treated with respect and individual differences recognised and valued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect the differences in others and to appreciate others for who they are</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learn in a clean, pleasant environment where both personal property and school property is respected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to treat all property, equipment and facilities with respect</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, racism, violence, discrimination or intimidation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report situations which make yourself or others feel uncomfortable</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be heard and to be included in the decision making process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect the right of others to participate in the decision making process</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have their privacy protected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect the privacy of staff, students and parents</li> </ul>

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/Student Code of Conduct. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Maribyrnong College's Bullying Prevention 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. 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, Maribyrnong 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.

Our school considers, explores and implements 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 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
- 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 and Training.

The Principal of Maribyrnong 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

Maribyrnong 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 and Compass portal
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
- involving families with homework via 5 weekly reports and the Redemption process
- involving families in school decision making via College Council
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

Maribyrnong 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
- Attitudes to School Survey
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- attendance and absence data
- CASES21
- SOCS
- Lookout data
- National Collection of Disability Data
- Navigator data

Maribyrnong 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 portal
- Included in staff induction processes
- 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	26 October 2022
Consultation	School Council 26 October 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	26 October 2024