



<b>POLICY</b>	<b>STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	October 2024
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	Principal and School Council
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Principal
<b>TO BE REVIEWED:</b>	October 2026



#### **Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Strathmore Secondary College on phone number 9379 7999.

### **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.

Strathmore Secondary College (SSC) 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

SSC was established in 1957 and is located in Strathmore, Melbourne. We have 1960 number of students enrolled from Years 7 to 12, 180 number of staff which are made up of leadership, teaching, education support and wellbeing staff.

Most students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school.

Our college provides students with a learning environment that is both inspiring and nurturing. We foster the intellectual growth of students and reinforce the need for perseverance and effort. We seek to promote the virtues of honesty, fairness and cooperation, all important in an age where nearly all serious work involves effective collaboration. We are committed to high academic outcomes for all students and creating a learning environment that recognises and cares for students as individuals.

Students are always placed at the centre of all decision making and the College has a strong focus on the holistic development of each student through their involvement in the rich academic, co-curricular and student leadership programs. We provide a comprehensive, challenging, academic curriculum that encourages a strong work ethic as well as extensive co-curricular opportunities which include our acclaimed sporting program, instrumental music, choral and performing arts program.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

SSC's values and philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of the school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values (see below) at every opportunity.

The motto of the College 'Palladem Alite' or nurture and cherish wisdom, suggests that wisdom has a deeper significance than learning or the mere acquisition of facts. It is knowledge applied to life and living.

Our school values:

**Perseverance**

**Respect**

**Integrity**

**Diversity**

**Excellence**

With this ideal, SSC seeks to:

- Foster the intellectual growth of students by developing their sense of worth and promote their sense of responsibility.
- Nurture the shared values of the school community; Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellence (PRIDE).

Our Statement of Values is available online at: [Statement of Values & School Philosophy](#)

### 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

SSC 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
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCE-VM to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at SSC use the College's Teaching Learning Instructional 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 SSC 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 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 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

- school community learning habits to encourage and develop a culture of learning that extends beyond the classroom environment
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Team Coordinator, 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 and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team, Team 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 programs
  - Cyber Safety
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour, anger management programs coping with stress in VCE
- opportunities for student inclusion i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities
- peers support 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.

### Targeted

- each year group has a 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 – refer to our [Strathmore Secondary College Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan](#) for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through Individual Education Plans, student support programs and policies.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds through Individual Education Plans and student support programs and policies.
- 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](#) and have a Stand Out group for students that is supported by teaching staff
- 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
- 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
- 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
- SSC assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

### Individual

SSC implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These 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
- 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 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 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
- with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

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

SSC 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. SSC 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
- referrals through the team structure which is supported by the Wellbeing Team.

#### 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, 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 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

The student Code of Conduct reflects the college's belief that:

- All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect.
- All individuals have a right to work in a secure and safe environment where they are able to fully achieve their potential.
- Students have a right to learn in a cooperative environment free from disruption.
- Parents/Carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in an environment of care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others.
- Parents/Carers have a responsibility to support the college in its efforts to maintain a positive learning environment.
- Principals and staff have an obligation to reasonably, consistently and fairly implement the consequences of breaching the Code of Conduct as referenced in the Child safe Environment Policy.

At SSC we expect students to live the school values of Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellence. We also expect that students will display responsibility and the ability to work cooperatively.

### **It is our expectation of students, that they:**

Foster a positive working environment by:

- Treating all members of the College community with courtesy and respect.
- Being tolerant and considerate to others and respecting their rights and property
- Following instructions.
- Being punctual and regular in attendance.
- Making use of the educational opportunities offered by the College and working to the best of their ability.

Promote a positive image of and climate within the College by:

- Behaving in a manner that reflects the College's attitudes and behavioural standards in all College related activities.
- Wearing full College uniform on all appropriate occasions.
- Not possessing or using cigarettes, alcohol, illicit drugs or potentially dangerous items on College premises or during College related activities.
- Not promoting or conducting inappropriate activities on College premises.
- Using College equipment only for appropriate purposes.
- Using technology appropriately as directed by a teacher.

Maintain a pleasant College environment by:

- Assisting in maintaining a clean and tidy College environment.
- Treating school and personal property with respect and being financially responsible if they fail to do so.

### **If expectations are not being met:**

When students do not behave accordingly teachers address the particular difficulty with the student, through discussion and counselling in the manner presented in the 'Teaching and Learning Framework' booklet. After discussion for example, there could be:

- Appropriate classroom consequences or interventions.
- Structured monitoring of behaviour.
- Discussion with the classroom teacher and Coordinators.
- Discussion with parents.

### **Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour**

When implementing consequences of inappropriate behaviour, actions will be guided by the core concepts of restorative practices.

#### **Consequences should:**

- Be appropriate in terms of severity.
- Be consistent in application (mindful of special circumstances).
- Address any harm done (restitution where appropriate).
- Facilitate the restoration of positive relationships between the offender and the offended.

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

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, SSC 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 Team 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>

The Principal of SSC 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.

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.

## 7. Engaging with families

SSC 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- 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.

## Evaluation

SSC 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)

SSC 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 in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- 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](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ 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	October 2024
Consultation	Principal and School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2026