

Dromana College Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Dromana Secondary College by telephoning 03 5987 2805

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.

Dromana 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 College 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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3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
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POLICY

1. School profile

Dromana College acknowledges and pays respect to the Boon Wurrung / Bunurong people part of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which the college is found.

Dromana College is uniquely located on 13 hectares of attractive land in a rural setting overlooking Port Phillip Bay, on the Mornington Peninsula. The college has a student population of approximately 1900. Students are bussed in

from all parts of the College Zone which crosses the Mornington Peninsula with an anticipated 20 local primary schools providing Year 7 students each year. The college has a Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) in 2021 of 1011 which reflects the broad range of socio-economic backgrounds of the student population. Most students come from families of an English-speaking background.

Our core business of teaching and learning revolves around the building and nurturing of relationships which is characterized by small teams of teachers working with students at years 7, 8 and 9. This strong pastoral approach is centred on a student-centred curriculum that aims to develop each individual as an effective and active learner. In the senior school years – years 10, 11 and 12 this approach continues with wide and varied individual pathways for students. Dromana College offers a diverse academically oriented VCE program, complemented by VET pathways and a strong and dynamic VCAL program.

The staff continually engages in professional growth opportunities to develop skills and strategies to use with students in the classroom. Recent activities have centred on High Impact Teaching Strategies which will form the basis of the teaching pedagogy of all teaching staff. This pedagogy is enhanced by staff and students access to a “one to one” device program supported by a sophisticated ICT infrastructure. The College uses *Compass* software to support student learning data, attendance, parent reporting, curriculum mapping and student and staff record management, as well as communication with a student’s family.

Significant improvements to the college facilities has been the construction of an innovative Technology Centre, Year Level Complexes to meet the emerging needs of students as members of a changing global community.

The outstanding college location, improved facilities and grounds, ongoing development of pedagogical practices, commitment to embracing ICT, professional staff and strong partnerships with parents and the community are strong pillars from which improvement in all areas will come.

- Catering to the educational needs of all students – goals, interests, expectations
- Focus on an inclusive curriculum where respectful relationships are fostered.
- Continue to promote positive relationships and immerse students in college values to enhance student connectedness and wellbeing.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Strong values provide a framework for all members of the school community to conduct themselves. Promotion and modelling of these values give purpose and direction to our lives and enhances the teaching and learning environment. Dromana College is a caring and supportive learning community which promotes the values of Respect, Integrity, Responsibility and Personal Best, which are demonstrated by the following behaviours:

Respect

- striving to develop our strengths and self-worth
- treating all others with courtesy, kindness and generosity
- upholding privacy and confidentiality
- embracing inclusive practices and celebrating individuality, diversity and equality
- minimising our impact on the environment and caring for all resources
- valuing the learning process

Integrity

- acting with honesty and fairness in all our dealings with others
- being accountable and transparent in our actions
- making choices based on truthfulness

Responsibility

- taking ownership for personal growth and learning
- being an active member of the college community
- acting with concern for others, locally and globally
- managing emotions, resolving conflict and developing self-discipline
- cooperating to develop positive relationships and considering the rights of others

Personal Best

- persevering in completing tasks
- striving to achieve challenging goals
- encouraging and supporting others to achieve their potential

- developing behaviours which support learning

Our positive school culture is also predicated on student engagement being the basis for learning. The college is engaged in developing classroom practices to ensure our pedagogy and curriculum engages all students by recognising and responding to their diverse learning needs. We ensure that our understanding of adolescence is informed by research and we are committed to undertaking professional development to ensure we can include best practices. We believe that all young people can experience success when fully engaged and actively participating in school life.

3.Engagement Strategies

Dromana 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
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Dromana College use the Dromana College Model of Effective Teaching 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 Dromana 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 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
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged 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 plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs

- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Group 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
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, 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 Year Group Leader/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 Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Policy 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.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background.
- 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
- 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
- Dromana College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Individual

Dromana College 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.

The College also defers to and adopts the guidelines found at the Department's Policy and Advisory Library on:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services including:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

4. Identifying students in need of support

Dromana 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Dromana 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, parents, classroom teachers and Year Level Teams

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 to 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

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values

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, Dromana 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 implement 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 Dromana 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.

Within classrooms student expectations will be guided by the **Dromana College Model of Effective Teaching** which provides for an **Orderly Environment**, where the teacher:

- Arrives promptly and is prepared
- “Respectful Classroom” approach is evident
- Has consistent expectations and routines
- Makes the Purpose of the lesson explicit to students.

The Dromana College Respectful Classroom system is based on the belief that when students are given the opportunity, they can correct classroom misbehaviours.

All students are expected to accept responsibility for creating a positive learning environment and the logical consequences for their actions. If Student behaviour disrupts learning or breaches the college values:

- Student will be given a warning
- The teacher will explain the student why their behaviour is inappropriate.
- The teacher will explain the consequences if the student continues with the behaviour.
- Students will be moved in the classroom if the behaviour continues, the teacher will ask the student to move position in the classroom.
- The student will be asked to leave the room:
 - If the Student behaviour continues, they will be removed to another class or designated area.
 - Students are expected to complete the task sent with them.
 - Students are expected to complete the ‘Taking Responsibility’ sheet.
 - Student are expected to present both the task and worksheet to their teacher prior to the next lesson with that teacher. It is the student’s responsibility to organise a suitable time for a discussion with the teacher about your behaviour.

7. Engaging with families

Dromana 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, 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.

8. Evaluation

Dromana 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
- SOCS

Dromana 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 in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- 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/carers 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

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| Policy last reviewed | June 2022 |
| Consultation | This policy was developed in consultation with the College Council in August 2022 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | 2024 |