

# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



## HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Koo Wee Rup Secondary College on 03) 5997 1444.

## 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.

Koo Wee Rup 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, 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.

## CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

## POLICY

### 1. SCHOOL PROFILE

Koo Wee Rup Secondary College is a co-educational school for students from Years 7 to 12. It was established in 1957 and is the oldest government secondary school in the area. The students come from a large geographical area with the Year 7 intake each year drawn from more than 25 primary schools. The majority of students travel on the school bus system and come from places which range from outer metropolitan to small country towns. In 2020 our student population is 1091.



KOO WEE RUP  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

Student Wellbeing and Engagement is centred around horizontal Learning Communities for each year level and is also supported by a vertical structure based on House groupings. The House pastoral care system, Student Wellbeing services and programs like The Resilience Project, Respectful Relationships and the Alternative Year 9 program are used to explicitly teach and promote skills which create a safe, orderly environment to maximise learning opportunities and develop life skills in students. We encourage student leadership and growth which is reflected in the range of leadership positions and programs for young people. School uniform is compulsory.

The Curriculum caters for a range of abilities and aspirations and by year 10 each student has a pathway and personalised program. We have been a SEAL (Selected Entry Accelerated Learning) school since 2005. We have an excellent Integration Department who look after our Disability and Integration students most successfully. We run the Advance program at Year 9 which partners 24 of our students with Parks Victoria in a course combining outdoor activities with community service. In Years 10 to 12 we offer a wide range of VCE subjects, offer on campus VET courses and three levels of VCAL.

The Co-curricular areas are seen as very important because they promote student engagement and connectedness to school, personal achievement, teamwork, positive relationships between students and staff, and are enjoyable. We have a well-established Instrumental Music program which includes four bands which regularly perform in public; an annual Musical and Music Festival; strong participation in interschool sport with many successful sporting teams; a HPV program; an annual Debutante Ball; an extensive camping program and a number of clubs including Chess and knitting.

We have very close ties with local community organisations which go back many years. Organisations such as the KWR Masonic Lodge, Rotary, Lions and the Bendigo Bank financially support many programs at the school, providing sponsorship, scholarship and promotion of College events.

Headspace and the Koo Wee Rup Hub also have a very strong relationship with the College providing counselling and programs for our students.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

## KEY DATA ABOUT THE COLLEGE:

- The ethnic backgrounds of our students are not diverse. The majority of the students were born in Australia. Some families have strong links to The Netherlands, Italy, Greece and India. There are very few Koori or Torres Strait Islander students in the school.
- The SFO is 0.5099. The SFOE Index is 0.4820.
- We have some students who receive funding under the Program for Students with Disabilities.
- When a comparison is made of our apparent retention numbers and our real retention numbers, and we consider also the pattern of enrolments throughout the school year, it is clearly evident that there is a significant transient population. Families regularly move into and out of the area. We are now retaining more students into the senior years than in the past.
- We are zoned for school bus transport and the majority of our students use the school bus system.

## 2. SCHOOL VALUES, PHILOSOPHY, AND VISION

Koo Wee Rup Secondary College's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of Personal Best, Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Honesty and Integrity at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Our *Statement of Values* is available online at: [www.kwrsc.vic.edu.au](http://www.kwrsc.vic.edu.au)

### 3. WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Koo Wee Rup 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. 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.



KOO WEE RUP  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

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 Koo Wee Rup Secondary College use a KWRSC 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 Koo Wee Rup Secondary 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 Student voice and Agency 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, 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



KOO WEE RUP  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

- 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 Action Plan for further information
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through linking them to community members from their country of origin to assist with integration.
- 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 \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- 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
- 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
- Koo Wee Rup Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan



## INDIVIDUAL

Students with additional wellbeing and learning needs are supported through a number of programs/resources. For example:

- *Individual Educational Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Wellbeing and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Lookout*
- *The mentoring and student support programs run through the KWR Hub*



Koo Wee Rup Secondary 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.

## 4. IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

Koo Wee Rup Secondary 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. Koo Wee Rup 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



**KOO WEE RUP**  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

## 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

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy/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, Koo Wee Rup Secondary 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 Koo Wee Rup 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.

## 7. ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES

Koo Wee Rup 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, 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

Koo Wee Rup 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
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Koo Wee Rup 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
- 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	November 2022
Consultation	School Council 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2022 School Community (Compass article) 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
Approved By	Principal
Next Scheduled Review Date	Before November 2024