



## **STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

### **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.

Elevation 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 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**

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
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### **POLICY**

#### **1. School profile**

Elevation Secondary College is located in a rapidly developing greenfield housing estate. A significant proportion of the community is made up of recent migrants to Australia. Data from Hume City Council identifies that as of the last census, while the main two ancestral backgrounds are described as English and Australian, the main cultural backgrounds are Indian, Italian, Turkish, Assyrian, Sri Lankan, Iraqi and Samoan. One of the main strengths

of the community is its aspiration and valuing of education. Many of the families who make up the community, come from cultural backgrounds where education is highly valued.

The diversity of the community provides another key strength. Families in the local area display a genuine mix of socioeconomic backgrounds, employment types and levels of educational attainment. The cultural backgrounds are broadly diverse. Language Background Other than English families make up between 70 and 80 percent of the community. This provides a diversity of experiences for the school to embrace and supports the schools mandate for inclusion and the purpose of state education.

Elevation Secondary College opened in 2020 with year 7 students only and are adding a year level each subsequent year:

- 2020 - Year 7
- 2021 - Year 8
- 2022 - Year 9
- 2023 – Year 10 (with some VCE provision)
- 2023 - Year 11 VCE
- 2024 - Year 12 VCE

Elevation Secondary College is being built in three stages. Stage 1 consisted of a Science and Technology specialist learning building, an Administration building and Generalist Learning community.

Stages 2 and 3 will consist of two more Generalist Learning communities and a Performing Arts and PE centre. There is no set timeline for the building of these stages. There is provision for long term and short term relocatable classrooms.

The school has a capacity of 1200 students, including 100 students as part of the Supported Inclusion Schools initiative.

## **Supported Inclusion Schools**

All schools must make reasonable adjustments to ensure all students have the same learning opportunities as each other.

Inclusive education is demonstrated in environments that adapt the following elements:

- Design and physical structures,
- Teaching methods, and curriculum, as well as the culture and
- Policy and practice of education environments so that they are accessible to all students without discrimination.

Elevation Secondary College is a supported inclusion school. A supported Inclusion School is a mainstream school with a physical design, unique enrolment policies, and specialist skill and expertise that provides additional support to a higher proportion of students with disability. The schools specifically support students who would usually attend specialist schools to instead attend their local neighbourhood school. All students benefit when children of various abilities and backgrounds learn together in an inclusive education setting. Benefits to students extend beyond the classroom when they are in an environment that reflects a wide diversity of abilities. Elevation Secondary College provides a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

As such, the school caters for a higher proportion of students with disabilities than other mainstream schools, up to 8% of the entire population as opposed to between 3 and 5% in most schools. The capacity for supported inclusion enrolments is 100 students out of the total capacity of the school which is 1200.

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

Elevation 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 Achievement, Acceptance, Responsibility and Community

Elevation Secondary College's vision is to be an inclusive and outward facing community that values improving student learning, social emotional outcomes and educational attainment for all students. The school aspires to be a school known for its academic excellence, orderly learning environments, inclusiveness and the outstanding opportunities it provides its students.

## **3. Engagement strategies**

Elevation Secondary 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.

The basis of our approach to student engagement and wellbeing is in the school values and behavioural expectations. All members of the community are expected to live the values of Achievement, Acceptance, Responsibility and Community as well as the key behavioural expectations of Aim High, Work Hard and Be Good.

### **School-wide Positive Behaviour Support**

To assist in embedding strengths-based practice, Elevation Secondary College is implementing the School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework.

SWPBS is a framework for creating safe and positive learning environments in schools, while improving the social-emotional and academic outcomes for students. It utilises a preventative approach that relies on research-based practices, including developing clear behavioural expectations, teaching these expectations, acknowledging appropriate behaviour, consistently correcting inappropriate behaviour, and using behavioural data to systematically solve problems. SWPBS can take a number of years for full implementation.

The values and behavioural expectations form the basis of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Model. The SWPBS was developed in the foundation year of the school and outlines the positive and expected behaviours from students in each area of the school. The SWPBS has been widely distributed to members of the community, displayed in every classroom and regularly taught in classes.

Other strategies to promote inclusion, wellbeing and engagement include Student Leadership programs which will endeavour to build a positive student culture and also the implementation of Respectful Relationships.

A major proactive strategy for engagement and wellbeing is undertaking professional learning in trauma informed approaches to education. A specific example of how this proactive strategy assists with wellbeing and engagement is in self-regulation plans. All students in the school develop a self-regulation plan, where they identify situations that cause them to become escalated and strategies that help them become present, centred and grounded, assisting them to rejoin learning in a faster manner and calmer classrooms.

### *Universal*

- Refining our School Wide Positive Behaviour Model that demonstrates expected behaviours according to the school values
- Assessing students against their ability to demonstrate the behavioural expectations on school reports
- Ensuring our uniform policy allows all students to demonstrate pride in the school, promotes equality and individuality
- Carefully planning transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Engaging in in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Safe Schools

### *Targeted*

Elevation Secondary College has access to the full range of supports from the Department of Education and Training including SSS support in terms of Psychologists and Speech Therapists. The school partners with agencies such as Headspace to find additional support for students with mental health crises. Regional transition officers are used for support for disengaged and school refusing students. Koori Engagement officers are used for support also.

Hume City Council provides connection to a range of agencies in the local area for support of targeted groups. These agencies include cultural support, family support agencies, mental health support agencies, youth and disability support agencies. The school supports students and families from these targeted cohorts to seek support in both proactive and responsive ways.

As the school grows, it is expected that an engagement team of youth workers and counsellors will be added to our wellbeing team to support and respond to the diverse needs of the school.

### *Individual*

- Student Support Groups see: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy>

- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Referral to student wellbeing and Student Support Services
- Referral to ChildFirst, Headspace, private psychologists
- DET Teaching Units

Elevation 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, Self-Regulation Action Plan and/or Behaviour Support Plan.
- Considering if any environmental changes needs to be made, for example, changing the classroom set up, using alternative communication techniques to engage with the curriculum, or making accommodations for assessment conditions
- 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 (CAMHS) or ChildFirst
  - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator
- Where necessary the school supports 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
  - Running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
    - With a disability
    - In Our of Home Care
    - And with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

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

The Inclusion Coordinator has direct oversight of all aspects of Inclusive education and our PSD students. These responsibilities include: curriculum, social emotional needs of students, physical needs of students, and management of Integration Aides. The Inclusion Coordinator also has a significant role in building the professional capacity of all staff in Inclusive Educational Practices.

Additionally, all school staff play a role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. The Assistant Principal(s) overseeing Engagement and Wellbeing has overall responsibility for the academic, behavioural, wellbeing and attendance of the students in the school.

Data from Compass assists the Leadership team to identify students in need of extra support. Data regularly analysed includes:

- Incident Reports
- overall academic and behavioural achievement data
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

Students who need extra support or identify a peer who needs extra support can make a student referral to their Mentor Group teacher, who then triages the request and identify the most appropriate member of the leadership team to refer the student to.

Students with disability at Elevation Secondary College will engage in academic instruction alongside their same age peers without disabilities, in whole class groups. Elevation Secondary College staff will practice positive behavioural supports and interventions to engage students – preventing behaviour, and teaching and reinforcing skills. Elevation Secondary College has adopted the School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework to teach school expected behaviours, inclusive of social-emotional coping strategies. The school staff are encouraged and supported to deliver best practice in developing self-determination skills in students including self-awareness, assertiveness, problem-solving and self-advocacy skills.

## **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 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.

## **6. Student behavioural expectations**

The school uses the School Wide Positive Behaviour Model to promote positive behaviours and to identify when those behaviours are not being met. When expected behaviours are not being met, disciplinary measures are handled on a case-by-case basis. These may be handled by the classroom teacher, mentor teacher, year level coordinator, leading teacher, assistant principal or principal. Sanctions will be decided on a case-by-case basis and can involve - conferencing, mediation, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension among others.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policies, 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>

Further information is also available at:

[https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/expulsionsparentsandcarersaboutschoo\(PDF\).pdf](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/expulsionsparentsandcarersaboutschoo(PDF).pdf)

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Suspensionsinformationforparentsandcarers.pdf>

As per Department policy, the principal of Elevation Secondary College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21. See

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>

The above procedures will be communicated to parents and guardians via the school website, Compass and via parents meetings as per the DET guidelines:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/resources> and

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/resources>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

## **7. Engaging with families**

Elevation Secondary College values the input of parents and carers, and we 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:

- Parent Teacher Interviews
- School Council and committees
- Development of Individual Learning Plans through the Student Support Group process
- Access to translation services where required

## **8. Evaluation**

Elevation Secondary College collects 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.

The leadership team regularly analyses data from Compass that categorises types of incidents and supports being provided. This data forms decision making about proactive programs, reactive responses and also future resourcing.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- bullying survey
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey

- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### Policy and Advisory Library

- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement](#)
- [Duty of Care](#)

### School Policies

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safe Standards
- Duty of Care Policy
- Yard and Supervision Policy

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on August 2019 and is scheduled for review in May 2020.

## REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

### REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on	March 2021
Approved by School Council on	April 2021
Recommended review cycle	3-4 years
This policy is schedule for review on	March, 2024

## POLICY INFORMATION

School council approval required?	Yes
Policy Template	<a href="https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/kyprocess/cp/SitePages/SchoolPoliciesDetail.aspx?CId=101">https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/kyprocess/cp/SitePages/SchoolPoliciesDetail.aspx?CId=101</a>

## POLICY HISTORY

Version	Month/Year
1	08 2019
2	04 2021