



## **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, 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
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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.

## **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 respect, integrity, kindness, achievement, acceptance, responsibility and community at every opportunity.

Elevation Secondary College'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 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. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies**

Elevation 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.

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.

### 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
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining *student wellbeing!*
- 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 school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Safe Schools
- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students, parents and carers
- Priorities 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 and VCE programs and to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Teachers at Elevation Secondary College use a common 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 Elevation 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 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 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
- Elevation Secondary College takes a trauma informed approach to school and lesson structures, procedures and practices. Teachers engage in professional learning on trauma informed practices using the Berry Street Educational Model (BSEM). Aspects of BSEM, such as self regulation strategies, are explicitly taught to students through the Personal Development program
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- 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

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.

- 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.
- 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 [insert any specific strategies you have in place to support CALD students]

- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through [insert any specific strategies or measures you have in place to support 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
- Elevation Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

### 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 Out 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.

Elevation Secondary School 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. Elevation Secondary School 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

## **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 concerns is available in our Complaints Policy.

## **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.

## **6. 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.

## **7. Student behavioural expectations and management**

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 our Bullying Prevention Policy

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Example School 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 Elevation 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.

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

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Suspension%20information%20for%20parents%20and%20carers.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.

## **8. Engaging with families**

Elevation 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:

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

## **9. 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Elevation 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 available on Elevation Secondary College website so that parents and other members of the school community can easily access information about Elevation Secondary College Bullying Prevention Policy.

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:

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement 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 and Advisory Library

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

### School Policies

- Child Safe Standards
- Duty of Care Policy
- Yard and Supervision Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2023
Consultation	SRC - November 2023 School Council – November 2023
Endorsed by	Principal
Endorsed on	November 2023
Next scheduled review date	November 2025