

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.

Ringwood 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Ringwood Secondary College is a vibrant school at the gateway to the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It has a safe, supportive and welcoming learning environment embracing success for each student. Established in 1954, the College has a long and successful tradition of academic excellence and innovative learning practices. The staff at Ringwood Secondary College take great pride in providing a safe and secure learning environment, whilst providing a range of dynamic and challenging academic and extracurricular programs. The College has an outstanding reputation in the community in the areas of academic excellence, performing arts and sport.

The College has a student population of 1610 students from Years 7 to 12, drawn from over 50 primary schools. Due to high demand, enrolments have been capped because of restricted space. Enrolments have steadily increased and there is strong demand for entry at all year levels. We have an International Student Program and a significant number of refugee students, mostly from Burma.

Ringwood Secondary College is a large school community with many different staff members to support students and their families. There are 140 teachers and 4 Principal Team members. The teaching staff is supported by approximately 42 non-teaching staff, who work in administration, library, integration, science, food studies and canteen. The College also has an ICT team that provides specialist technical support for students and staff, and the students are further supported through the student wellbeing team, school Nurse, Chaplain, multicultural aides and careers team.

The College offers a comprehensive and challenging curriculum for all students. ICT is an integral part of the curriculum, with students having one-to-one devices from Year 7. Students have the opportunity to begin selecting elective subjects from Year 9, with students gaining more subject choice each subsequent year. From Year 10, eligible students will have the opportunity to undertake Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) subjects as part of their studies. In Years 11 and 12, successful applicants can complete the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). The school also has its own award-winning registered training facility - Ringwood Training (RT), which provides education and training for students and adults within local schools and community.

2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

Ringwood Secondary College's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work we do and is the foundation of our school community. Every member of the College community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

Ringwood Secondary College is proud to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

Ringwood Secondary College Vision and Values:

- Care and Compassion - Care for self and others

- Integrity - Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- Doing Your Best - Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
- Respect - Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view
- Fair Go - Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- Responsibility - Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
- Freedom - Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
- Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion - Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others
- Honesty and Trustworthiness - Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

The Vision and Values philosophy is enacted through everyday interactions between staff, students and parents, our pastoral care program, our curriculum program and our extra curricula program. In addition, Ringwood Secondary College has formed strong partnerships with local, national and global organisations which further enhance the education pillars of Learning to be yourself, Learning to do, Learning to think and Learning to live together.

3. Engagement Strategies

Ringwood 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.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

Ringwood Secondary College implements a range of strategies that support and promote universal engagement. These can include:

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *prioritising 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*
- *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*
- *delivering 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 Ringwood Secondary College use a GANAG 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 Ringwood 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*
- *positive behaviour and student achievements are acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents*
- *monitoring student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *encouraging students to explore leadership opportunities through various programs, workshops, involvement through extra-curricular groups and leadership rolls*
- *providing students with the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through Student Leadership and other forums including focus groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns*
- *opportunities for student inclusion and across—age connections amongst students through College productions, sport and music programs*
- *encouraging students to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, House Coordinators, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind*
- *engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as Bounce and Respectful Relationships*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
 - *Bounce*
- *acknowledging examples of positive behaviour and student achievement, both informally in classroom settings and more formal events such as assemblies, presentation afternoons and evenings*
- *providing opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*

Targeted

Ringwood Secondary College implements a range of strategies that support and promote targeted engagement. These can include:

- *each year level having a Sub-School Team responsible for their year, who monitor and support the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *all students being assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future*
- *connecting all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a House Coordinator, have an Individual Educational Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment (if warranted)*

- *assisting and supporting students in organising their Year 10 work experience placement, supported by their Career Action Plan*
- *wellbeing and health staff undertaking health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year*
- *all students in Year 9 undertaking OH&S training and testing in preparation for Work Experience placements in Year 10*
- *the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Coordinator liaising with teachers and multicultural aids to support refugee students in their learning*

Individual

Ringwood 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 Educational 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*

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*
- *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

Ringwood 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. Ringwood 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*

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, 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.

6. Student Behavioural Expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Ringwood Secondary College's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Ringwood Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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 reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

7. Engaging with Families

Ringwood 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
- 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

Ringwood 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
- SOCS

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on the 16th June 2020 and is scheduled for review in June 2022.