



# STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY AT COBRAM SECONDARY COLLEGE

*The school of choice for the Cobram  
Community*



## **Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Cobram Secondary College, 5871 1700.

## **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

Cobram Secondary College believes every student deserves a safe and positive learning experience where they are engaged and supported to reach their full potential.

The College adheres to the principles of Australian democracy and takes into account the diversity of all children and makes reasonable efforts to accommodate them. This includes (but is not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning (LGBTIQ+) individuals, and children who are vulnerable.

The College is committed to creating a child safe environment protecting children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

## **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.

Cobram 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**

Cobram Secondary College believes every student deserves a safe and positive learning experience where they are engaged and supported to reach their full potential.

The College adheres to the principles of Australian democracy and takes into account the diversity of all children and makes reasonable efforts to accommodate them. This includes (but is not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) individuals, and children who are vulnerable.

The College is committed to creating a child safe environment protecting children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

## PURPOSE

The College is committed to creating a child safe environment protecting children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

The College provides a broad range of educational opportunities to cater for all students, both inside and outside of the College. The College is integral to the community and believes that this is demonstrated by our ongoing commitment and involvement in community organisations such as Goulburn Murray Local Learning & Employment Network (GMLLEN), Goulburn Ovens TAFE (GO TAFE) and other community support agencies.

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

Cobram Secondary College is committed to building a secure learning environment where all students feel culturally, emotionally and physically safe. The College value of ‘every student matters, every staff member cares, every opportunity taken and every student succeeds.’

**Every student matters:** All students are actively monitored by the Student Engagement and Connectedness Team to ensure that they are provided a safe, inclusive and engaging learning environment tailored to their needs. Preventions, interventions, celebrations and support is provided by this team when required.

All prevention and intervention engagement and wellbeing programs are developed in response to student needs that have been determined by up-to-date research, as well as quantitative and qualitative analyses of school data. Data is used to evaluate and refine current programs. We recognise the importance of interagency collaboration in supporting and improving students learning outcomes and wellbeing.

**Every staff member cares:** All staff members follow a set of processes in the classroom in order to maintain a predictable, orderly, safe and fair learning environment that ensures all students can experience success and engage in their learning.

**Every opportunity taken:** All students are provided a range of in-class and extra-curricular activities appropriate to their year level. These activities are designed to increase engagement in learning and positive behaviour and offered by both internal and external providers.

**Every student succeeds:** Every student is provided with programs that allow them to grow both educationally, socially and emotionally. All students are recognised and celebrated for their growth and achievements.

### 3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Cobram 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

- 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
- 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 Cobram Secondary College use a Workshop Instructional Framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction and teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Cobram 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 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 Leadership and other forums including year group meetings and Student Mentors. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, mentor, Year Level Leader, 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 Level 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
  - Live 4 Life
  - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- all staff members participate in the Student Mentor Program

## Targeted

- each year group has a Year Level Leader, 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
- 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
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Cobram Secondary College assists students to undertake work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- 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
- For disengaged students, connections to school are maintained through a Re-Engagement Program
- For students in Year 8, 9 & 10, an applied Learning Program is offered

## Individual

Cobram 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
- 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.
  - Look Out

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

Cobram 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. Cobram 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 and Year Level Leaders

## **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:

- Be treated fairly and respectfully by all members of the school community
- Be safe and secure
- Stimulating teaching and learning
- Learn in the classroom without interruption
- A clean, ordered and safe learning environment
- Equitable access to school programs regardless of gender, cultural background, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
- Express their views appropriately through the appropriate channels (e.g. School Captains, House Leaders, Student Leadership)
- Receive ongoing communications, effective feedback about both classwork and behavior, along with assessments and reports about their progress.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Come to school in correct uniform
- Bring equipment, be ready and prepared to learn
- Attend school 90% of the time or more; be on time to school and attend all classes
- Remain at school in class for the whole day
- Participate in College programs that are offered appropriate to their year level
- Respect the right of others to learn and be willing to take on all learning opportunities
- Communicate clearly and honestly any issues of concern they have about their learning to an appropriate staff member
- Care for their own property/equipment and respect the property/equipment of other students and of the school
- Respect the individuality of others regardless of gender, sexuality, race, marital status, religious beliefs, family background, political beliefs, physical or mental disability or impairment or the status or condition of being a parent or childless.
- Use digital technology and electronic communication in a safe and respectful manner
- Respect their personal health and emotional wellbeing (and that of others) and comply with school regulations associated with prohibiting the use of cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs

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 and management**

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 Cobram Secondary College's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Cobram 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 Leader
- 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 Cobram Secondary College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

## **7. Engaging with families**

Cobram 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

Cobram 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

Cobram 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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2025