



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Approved by School Council September 2018

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.

Bentleigh 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

Bentleigh Secondary College continues to develop a culture of high expectations with a focus on innovations and developments in curriculum and pedagogy which are rigorous and underpinned by current research and ongoing active evaluation. Our college has 103.1 equivalent full-time staff; 3 Principal class, 83.4 teachers and 19.3 Education Support Staff. Increasing enrolments reflect a strong and growing reputation in our local community and 1080 students were enrolled in 2018. Based on the school's Student Family Occupation index we have a mid-high socio-economic profile and our proportion of students with English as a Second Language is in the mid range. Our Parent Satisfaction Summary indicates that our score is above the State median. Bentleigh's work in the area of sustainability has received national and international recognition. Our extra-curricular programs offer outstanding opportunities in instrumental music, the performing arts, LOTE study tour to Japan and a STEAM/History Tour in Europe, leadership, sport, camps and activities, and community service. Strong and positive relationships are the cornerstone of our inclusive college culture which boasts a vibrant International Study Program. There is a genuine focus on student leadership and student voice in all areas of the college and a vibrant House System.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Bentleigh Secondary College educates the whole student, developing a love of learning in all students to achieve their personal best academically, socially and emotionally. The College motto 'Be the best you can be' is something everyone in our school community is encouraged to aspire to and is reflected in all college activities. The college works to maximise student learning in an inclusive learning environment. We aim to develop independent, creative, resilient and positive individuals; equipped with the personal, social, academic and technological skills necessary in a changing world.

Strong and positive relationships are the cornerstone of our inclusive College culture. These relationships are supported by our values: the right to learn; the right to be treated with respect and the right to be safe. The values inform the College Code of Conduct. There is a genuine focus on student leadership and student voice in all areas of the college.

At Bentleigh Secondary College we believe schools must provide opportunities for the development of the skills and capacities young people need to lead creative, satisfying and productive lives.

Two of our key educational priorities are to ensure students have access to curriculum activities which broaden and deepen their experience and fosters students' personal effort to strive for excellence.

Our vision is to develop students who:



- will be engaged in their learning and become lifelong learners who will develop resilience and optimism
- are independent learners, whose learning styles are extended by teachers who use a wide range of teaching strategies and learning technologies
- will utilise technology that will provide them with experiences that enable them to develop an international perspective and acquire the values to become responsible global citizens.

3. Engagement strategies

Our students are engaged in their learning and this is confirmed by our excellent results in the Students' Attitudes to School Survey particularly in the area of Teaching and Learning.

Bentleigh Secondary College is organised into two sub schools. Middle (Years 7 to 9) and Senior (Years 10 to 12). Each sub school is overseen by a Head of Sub School and each year group has a Head of Year Level. These staff members are responsible for the wellbeing and engagement of students and tracking their academic progress. They are a point of contact for students and parents who may need additional support.

A key focus of the college strategic plan is Student Wellbeing. All students are supported both emotionally and academically through a range of programs and the building of positive relationships. The individual learning needs of our students are strongly supported through classroom teaching, the Program for Students with Disabilities, the Gifted and Talented Program and intensive literacy, and EAL and Indigenous student support. On the Students' Attitudes to School Survey, our students clearly feel safe, motivated and connected to the college. This is confirmed by our attendance rates, which have been consistently above the state median.

Bentleigh Secondary College responds to the needs and expectations of parents and the community by providing educational programs that cater for a variety of learning styles, student needs and ambitions. We develop a Growth Mindset in our teachers and students. Parent involvement in all aspects of the college is actively encouraged and parents are included as active partners with the college in their child's education.

Innovative practice is a driving force for our teaching and learning. At Year 7 and Year 8 students' inquiry based learning brings together all students and teachers in a thematic approach to explore questions in an interdisciplinary manner. At Year 9, students are involved in the Learning Journey program, developing their own projects and community involvement. At Year Seven to Year Ten, students focus on Problem Solving in STEAM in the college's new Da Vinci Centre. Bentleigh Secondary College is proud of its academic tradition and continues to focus on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

In our Senior School, Bentleigh Secondary College delivers a broad curriculum including VCE Programs and enables students access to VET Programs to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations. Students are supported by individual career and course counselling, visits to industry, TAFE and universities, information sessions, a career newsletter, work experience and career focused guest speakers and workshops. Our college has close links to Holmesglen TAFE which offers a VCAL pathway to students in Years 10-12. In the last couple of years we have seen a significant increase in the number of students entering university as we counsel and manage all students to ensure successful pathway transitions. Our college student pathways program supports our culture of achievement by offering a dynamic and comprehensive careers program that encourages student aspirations. Our expectation and commitment is to ensure all students are fully supported with transition to further education, training and employment.

Bentleigh Secondary College uses an Explicit Instructional Model in classes to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidence-based, high impact teaching strategies are incorporated into all lessons. We have developed a Whole School Writing Program which is supporting all students to develop their writing skills across subject areas. The college has adopted 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.

Attendance

Bentleigh Secondary College understands that maximum attendance is a key to student engagement and successful student learning outcomes. The college has actively embraced an approach in dealing with students whose attendance is not maximised. At the Senior School the college effectively monitors student attendance to ensure student VCE results are enhanced through positive engagement supported by appropriate policies and procedures. The Head of Year Level is responsible for monitoring student attendance, along with the Wellbeing Team.

Professional Learning

Teacher professional learning is given high priority at Bentleigh Secondary College to enhance quality teaching and learning. Through targeted professional development teachers are skilled in understanding and catering to the different learning needs of students, by developing learning experiences which are rigorous, challenging and meaningful. Student expectations are challenged through this process. Teachers build positive relationships with their students through a cooperative learning environment supported by our strong professional development ethos.



Building Leadership Capacity

Bentleigh Secondary College promotes distributive leadership with continuous development in enhancing the leadership capacity of both students and staff. This leads to an improved learning and engagement culture. A rigorous and inclusive accountability framework based on reciprocity has been introduced.

Staff have been encouraged to develop leadership capacity within the classroom, in their positions of responsibility and by actively participating in the various teams and committees that lead our college community. All teaching staff, as part of the Annual Performance and Development Review process, are required to visit other teachers' classrooms and engage in professional dialogue around improving teaching practice. Staff are also encouraged to be involved in professional associations and networks to broaden their capacity and model best practice within the college.

Bentleigh Secondary College's leadership and managerial behaviour focuses on people, on development and on core business. A key aim is the enhancement of our team culture through supportive leadership, role clarity, and participative decision-making and professional interaction. The outcome is improved school performance and staff motivation.

The Student Representative Council, Green Machine, the Respect Committee, Sport and House are forums in which students can demonstrate their leadership capacity and contribute to student voice in the college. Year Level Assemblies are also led by students. Formal and inclusive whole school assemblies led by School Captains have allowed a culture of student success to be celebrated. Wherever possible, students are encouraged to participate in other leadership programs at school and within the broader community. We have two elected student representatives and two School Captains on School Council who also participate in sub-committee meetings and Council meetings.

Inclusion, Wellbeing & Transitions

- The Bentleigh Secondary College Student Wellbeing Team provides a comprehensive range of supports for all students within the college. The team consists of the Head of Wellbeing, the Program for Students with Disabilities Coordinator (PSD), Counsellors, the Adolescent Health Nurse and Integration Aides.
- The Student Wellbeing Team works closely with Youth Support Services within the City of Glen Eira and Bayside areas along with Bentleigh Bayside Community Connect. There is a strong focus on developing and strengthening effective partnerships between the college, the home and local service agencies. In supporting students who may be at risk of disengaging from school, the Wellbeing Team work closely with the Pathways Co-ordinator, agencies such as Youth Xpress. The college has developed a close working relationship with the clinicians at Alfred Child Youth Mental Health Service (Alfred CYMHS) and teachers in the Alfred Education Centre. These providers assist in delivering professional development to build the capacity of our staff to meet the diverse needs of our students.
- Bentleigh Secondary College's wellbeing programs address the strengthening of emotional, academic and social health of all students. These include Peer Support along with targeted programs at various year levels, such as Mindfulness Meditation, Respectful Relationships, Safe Schools, Bully Stoppers, Cybersafety, Safe Partying, Sexual Health, Stress Management, Body Image, Anger Awareness, Civic Rights, Calmer Classrooms, Responsibilities and Goal Setting.
- The Head of Wellbeing facilitates educational assessments, counselling, family and academic supports and referrals to specialist assistance.
- Bentleigh Secondary College has many successful student transition and pathways programs. Our Year 7 transition program is comprehensive and includes a pastoral program that includes a significant teacher, personal learning subject, transition camp and peer support.
- Students are welcome to self-refer to the Wellbeing Team, the Adolescent Health Nurse, Heads of Year Level, Assistant Principals 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
- Bentleigh Secondary College creates opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs. There are also opportunities for participation in sports teams, clubs and lunchtime activities.

Bentleigh 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 the 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 where the student sits in the classroom
- referring the student to:
 - School-based wellbeing supports, such as the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator or Team



- Student Support Services (SSS)
- 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

Other supports:

- Connect all Indigenous 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 will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment and connection with Lookout
- 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

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 Plan 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.

Student Support Groups, see: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>

4. Identifying students in need of support

Intensive literacy support

Bentleigh Secondary College has a history of supporting literacy enhancement particularly at Year 7 and Year 8 with the provision of a literacy expert. Our Year 7 students' literacy needs are carefully assessed through a range of tests and targeted intervention programs including Individual Learning Plans, classroom support and withdrawal. The needs of our EAL and indigenous students are also met through targeted literacy, learning and social support programs. A Homework Club operates after school once a week with a special focus on literacy and numeracy support and is available to all students.

Students with disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- The nature of the student's disability
- His or her preferred adjustment
- Any adjustments that have been provided previously
- Any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

Bentleigh 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 that help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Bentleigh 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 (see point 2).

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 Bentleigh Secondary College's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Bentleigh 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.

Bentleigh Secondary College Code of Conduct

All Codes of Conduct contained in this document acknowledge and follow the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001, which supports racial and religious tolerance and prohibits vilification on the grounds of race or religion.

Student Code of Conduct

The aim of the Bentleigh Secondary College Code of Conduct is the development of self-discipline based on the following principles:

- **The right to learn**
- **The right to be treated with respect**
- **The right to be safe.**

Rights:	Responsibilities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to a positive learning environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responsibility to be punctual, fully equipped, cooperative and prepared to follow instructions and complete set tasks to ensure that lessons proceed without interruption.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to be secure and to be treated with respect, politeness and understanding, and to feel emotionally secure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responsibility to treat others with respect, politeness and understanding. • This means students must not engage in any forms of bullying whether it be physical, verbal or cyber bullying. • Bullying will not be tolerated at any level.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to be treated fairly and equally irrespective of individual differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responsibility to treat others fairly and equally irrespective of individual differences.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right to be physically and cyber safe in the school environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The responsibility to behave in a way that will not threaten or endanger oneself or others. This includes the responsibility to report any defective equipment or hazards and to follow any rules which are designed to avoid accidents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right for one's personal school approved belongings to be safe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The responsibility not to steal, damage or destroy the property of others; to hand in any items which are found; and to follow any rules which are designed to protect people's belongings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right to spend time at school in pleasant, clean and well-maintained buildings and grounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The responsibility to care for the school environment by keeping grounds and buildings neat and clean, and to correctly dispose of litter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right to expect the community to support, respect and have pride in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The responsibility to behave and dress in a way that the community will respect the school.

Bentleigh Secondary College Rules

Respect is the premise on which the Code of Conduct is based and the key to its successful implementation.

R- Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships

E- Empathy and Enthusiasm

S- Safety and Security

P- Punctuality, Presentation and Preparedness

E- Environment- Physical and Social

C- Consideration, Cooperation and Calmer Classrooms

T- Teaching and Learning

If a Bentleigh Secondary student behaves in a way that impinges on the rights of students and staff or is unable to meet the responsibilities outlined above, teachers will use a series of steps to assist the student to become a more positive member of our community. Some of the behaviours that will challenge our cooperative learning community and the steps that teachers will use are outlined below. All of these steps are underpinned by the college's Restorative Practices approach.

When things go wrong	When someone has been hurt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What happened? What were you thinking at the time? What have you thought about since? Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way? What do you think you need to do to make things right? What can I (the college) do to help? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you think when you realised what had happened? What impact has the incident had on you and others? What has been the hardest thing for you? What do you think needs to happen to make things right? What can I (the college) do to help?

Our college considers that a positive approach to behaviour is desirable to foster a school climate within which personal responsibility and self-discipline will be developed.

Students are expected to:

- behave in a responsible manner, obey staff directions, and allow other students to learn without interference
- respect personal property of other people and the school environment
- comply with all school policies including the student code of conduct and the sexual harassment policy
- wear correct school uniform to and from, as well as at school
- be punctual, be prepared for all classes and to complete homework

We are committed to the following strategies to encourage our students to develop self-discipline:

- provide positive reinforcement to improve self-esteem – implement a Growth Mindset approach
- acknowledge differences and encourage sharing, tolerance and compassion among students in order to develop respect for others
- provide consistent and fair forms of discipline
- foster a community pride in the school



- work with students in conjunction with parents

Accepted consequences for non-compliance with the student code of conduct:

Initial Consequences

All classroom teachers will use a classroom management plan which provides opportunity for the student to change their misbehaviour. If a student continues to misbehave they may then be sent to the Head of Year Level. The following types of severe misbehaviour will be followed up and consequences will apply.

- physical abuse
- wilful damage of property
- verbal abuse of teachers or students

Follow Up Consequences

Teachers need to follow up with the Head of Year Level and discuss further consequences. These may include:

- discussion of student's responsibilities
- individual program that reinforces responsibilities and rules
- withdrawal from group activity to enable the student to evaluate behaviour
- written and/or verbal apology
- consultation with parents
- detention
- referral to appropriate counselling
- re-assessment of privileges
- belongings or clothing excluded by the rules to be confiscated for later collection where appropriate
- suspension/exclusion procedures are followed in line with Department of Education and Training Guidelines.

Every effort will be made to ensure that logical consequences are applied for inappropriate behaviour. This Code of Conduct acknowledges the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 which supports racial and religious tolerance and prohibits vilification on the grounds of race or religion. Bentleigh Secondary College has procedurally fair processes for managing student behaviour. Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment will not be used at this school under any circumstances.

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>

7. Engaging with families

Bentleigh 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 (to be completed).
- 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

Bentleigh 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

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- the College's Bullying Prevention Policy
- the College's Parents' Code of Conduct
- the Inclusion and Diversity Policy (To be finalised)
- Communicating with School Staff Policy

Bentleigh Secondary College's Child Safety Code of Conduct is consistent with the Education Department's recommendation.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/chilsafestandards.aspx>

Safe Schools are Effective Schools at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm> and departmental advice to schools on cyber bullying at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm>

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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 11 September 2018 and is scheduled for review in 1-2 years time.