

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy (2021)

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.

Westall 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

Westall Secondary College is located in the south east of Melbourne. It is 30 minutes from the Melbourne Central Business District and five minutes from Monash University Clayton campus. The school currently has 500+ students drawn from the local area and the international community. The College is a well-established, co-educational, government school which enrolls students from Year 7 to 12. The College achieves excellent results for local and international students.

The Westall area is undergoing significant change and growth in the next 5-10 years. We have received planning money from the State Government to plan and redevelop both Westall Primary School and Westall Secondary College. This is an incredibly exciting time in the journey and growth of Westall Secondary College.

Academic Excellence

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Our programs at Westall Secondary College are designed to encourage the highest standard of achievement in everything our students undertake. The College is committed to excellence through a personalised approach to teaching and learning. The College emphasis in junior years is on core competencies of literacy and numeracy across all subjects in the curriculum. Extensive course and career counselling in Year 10 so that informed choices can be made for VCE or VCAL and beyond. Academic rigour, initiative and self-discipline are central to life in the school with a shared goal of achievement between staff and students, inspiring the whole college.

Your Child- Our Student

Helping our students to feel happy, secure and confident is an important priority for all Westall Staff.

The friendly and supportive atmosphere at Westall is underpinned by a strong code of conduct, a distinctive uniform policy, firm structures and clear expectations. Student development embraces academic progress, the building of character, self-worth and sense of community. We celebrate our top VCE results, but what really matters to us at Westall is that all of our students graduate as confident, well-educated young adults, well prepared to take charge of their future.

An International Perspective

Westall College is proud to be an accredited provider of education for International students. The College values its harmonious diversity of cultures, which enriches the life of the whole school community.

The College has a federally funded English Language Centre on site which provides intensive EAL (English as an additional Language) to newly arrived students. This program caters for refugees, migrants and International fee paying students.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

At Westall Secondary College our philosophy is based on meeting the needs and wants of our students. We endeavour to find the perfect balance between the explicit teaching of key skills and giving the students the opportunity to follow their passions. This sounds like an obvious concept, but what does it mean at Westall?

Personalised learning

We meet the needs of students by ensuring the learning is at the appropriate level for every student in every subject. Students are engaged in literacy and numeracy in a challenging manner to ensure that they are in their 'wobble zone'.

Wellbeing

Our school values around 'CARE' are visible in everything we do and we want every student to be the best version of themselves. We have a calm, supportive environment at Westall and this calmness provides an amazing setting to complete your secondary education.

College Values

CARE FOR yourself: personal worth

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CARE FOR others: Respectful relationships

CARE FOR your school: Respect our environment

CARE FOR your learning: strive for excellence

Literacy, Numeracy and STEM

Literacy is the number one focus of our College. We believe that ALL students should reach their optimum level of literacy by Year 10 so that they will be well prepared for their desired pathway, be it VCE, VCAL and eventually the workforce. Our explicit, targeted teaching of key literacy skills across all subjects enable our students to grasp concepts and ideas more successfully.

Numeracy is our other major building block for learning. We have trained STEM staff, a partnership with Deakin University and a new STEM program available at all year levels.

Aim High

Aim High is a selective extension program which is offered in all subjects. Students are challenged through high order thinking and critical inquiry within an advanced curriculum, which ensures they are learning at their optimum level.

iCreate

iCreate is an elective program for all students in years 7-12 where, on Wednesdays, students have the opportunity to follow their passion and undertake a project-based elective program.

As the classes are made up with students from a range of age groups, it is a great opportunity for students to integrate more fully into the Westall Learning Community. Subjects include Aviation, Taekwondo, Outdoor Education and Coding.

International Program and Westall English Language Centre

Westall Secondary College has a well-established International Program, recruiting students from China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia and India, whereby students complete their secondary education in Australia. With globalisation now the reality for the current generation, learning about other cultures and interacting with people from across the world is paramount and the Westall International Program affords our students the holistic education needed for success in the workforce.

Westall English Language Centre (WELC)

Westall English Language Centre is a Government funded facility which provides an intensive English program for newly arrived students. WELC caters for students who have arrived in Australia as refugees, migrants, or are full fee paying overseas students. Most students are eligible to participate in the 20-week English as an Additional Language (EAL) intensive program prior to transitioning to a mainstream educational setting.

The learning focus in the Language Centre is not only on learning English in preparation for the mainstream classroom, but also on personal development. Regular incursions and excursions are undertaken to support the learning and to expose newly arrived students to Australian life and culture.

3. Engagement strategies

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Westall 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*
- *The Westall Way Positive Learning Behaviour Framework*



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- *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 Westall Secondary College use the EDI 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 Westall 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 Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers,*

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Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, 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*
- *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
 - *Bully Stoppers*
 - *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)*
- *buddy programs, peers support programs*

Targeted

- *each sub school (Junior, Middle and Senior) has a Director of Learning (Leading Teacher) and each year group has a Year Group 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*
- *teachers will follow the ‘Getting students back on track in the classroom’ flowchart to implement the Westall Way in the classroom*



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students back on tr:

- *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 will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *Westall Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 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*

Individual

- *Monitor and regularly update the student chronicle on Compass*

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- *Student Support Groups, see:*
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroup.s.aspx>
- *Individual Learning Plans for All students with learning needs*
- *Behaviour Support Plans for students with behavioural support needs*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services*



Making a
Wellbeing referral.p

- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Lookout*

Westall 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.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

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Westall 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. Westall 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 captured through the West Way Positive Learning Behaviours Framework. The Westall Way Learning Behaviours are a set of expectations that bring together the College's Values, as well as the existing Code of Cooperation for Junior School, Middle School and Senior School. The learning behaviours are not a set of traditional school rules, but a set of agreed behaviours that all students should endeavour to demonstrate in College life.

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The Westall Way Learning Behaviours have been created by College Leadership team and the Student Representative Council, in consultation with the wider College staffing body. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Westall Secondary College's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Westall 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. Restraint and seclusion

Policy

This policy outlines when physical restraint and seclusion are permitted to be used in Victorian government schools and lists practices that are not permitted to be used in Victorian government schools. This policy details reporting and notification requirements and the responsibilities school and Department staff have in relation to incidents of physical restraint and seclusion.

Summary

Physical restraint and seclusion are only permitted within Victorian government schools in exceptional circumstances where it is immediately required and reasonably necessary to protect the safety of a student or another person. Physical restraint and seclusion are not permitted at any other time.

No person – including a parent/carer, clinician, practitioner, or student – can authorise, consent to, or approve the use of physical restraint or seclusion in a school.

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Every instance of physical restraint and seclusion must be reported as an incident on eduSafe Plus, the department's online incident reporting and hazard management system, or by calling the Incident Support and Operations Centre (ISOC) on 1800 126 126.

Every instance of physical restraint and seclusion require schools, regions, and central office to undertake specified actions according to the severity rating of the incident.

For more information, please visit <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

8. Engaging with families

Westall 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.
- 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

Westall 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

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

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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

- *WSC Bullying Prevention policy*

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	1 September 2021
Consultation	School council consulted Wed 20/10/2021
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	1 September 2024