

NORWOOD SECONDARY COLLEGE

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the General Office.

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

Norwood Secondary College (NSC) is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

Norwood Secondary College, in the City of Maroondah, is a single campus coeducational Years 7-12 College with a stable enrolment that is capped at 1100. Established in 1958, the College has an outstanding reputation in the community, particularly in the areas of academic excellence, sport and the performing arts. The College caters for the educational needs of students from a wide range of primary schools in the local community and values the positive relationship established with these schools.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

For more detail regarding staffing and student numbers refer to the annual report on the College website: <https://www.norwood.vic.edu.au/annual-reports/>

2. School values, philosophy and vision

NSC provides innovative and engaging teaching and learning for all students. The school focuses on successfully engaging students as active participants in life-long learning. Our curriculum nurtures the potential of each student and encourages them to achieve their personal best in all areas. At Norwood our students are well prepared for the challenges and rigours of an academic curriculum, and thrive on the opportunities offered by our sporting, leadership, camping and outdoor education programs. Instrumental Music and Performing Arts (including school productions) are an integral part of the school's co-curricular program. The College Values provide an important base for all our interactions with students and the community. Our core values are Respect, Aspiration, Responsibility, and Resilience.

At NSC students are provided with a sound basis for a life that is fulfilling, respectful of self, others and the environment. We prepare our students to be flexible, adaptable, innovative leaders in our local and global community.

Our bonds with the community are a source of strength and inspiration for us. Our students gain much from their links and involvement with community programs and activities, whilst the contributions of parents and friends are valued and encouraged across all aspects of College life.

MISSION

At NSC we believe that every student can learn and each student is encouraged and supported to achieve his or her personal best. NSC staff understand the need to build an educational community through quality relationships with students, parents and staff and have the growth and development of each individual as its primary focus.

OBJECTIVE

At NSC we are committed to providing an experience where, in years to come, students will be proud to have attended a college where they have made lifelong friends, are lifelong learners and valuable contributors to the community.

VALUES

NSC's values are respect, aspiration, responsibility and resilience.

- **Respect:** All members of our community are expected to respect the College, others and themselves.
- **Aspiration:** Students are encouraged to be the best they can be in all endeavours.
- **Responsibility:** All members of our community are expected to take responsibility for their actions.
- **Resilience:** The College will support to assist our community members to develop both a strong sense of worth and the capacity to overcome negative experiences or disappointments.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://www.norwood.vic.edu.au/policies/>

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

NSC has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and the Vocational Major to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- Teachers at NSC use our Teaching and Learning Instructional Model (MAPS) 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 NSC adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- Our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- Carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- Monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including Year Level Leadership Teams. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Mentors, Year Level Coordinator (YLC), Head of Year Level (HOYL), Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the annual College Production, College Carnivals (Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country), music programs and peer support programs

- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team, the Health Centre, their Mentor Teacher, YLC, HOYL, 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:
 - Whole school partnership with Real Schools, to implement restorative practices
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour and disengagement (i.e. Programs that have an applied learning focus)
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Peers support programs
- Measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Targeted

- Each year level is supported by a Year Level Team (YLC and HOYL) who support the health and wellbeing of students in their year level, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. All Koorie students have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and regular Student Support Group Meetings (SSGs), with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) in attendance
- Our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school. A staff member is appointed to oversee the learning program of EAL students
- We provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Student Support
- All students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- Wellbeing staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- 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
- NSC assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Individual

NSC 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 a student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- Developing an Individual Education 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 such as headspace or Child First. Other valuable resources include: LOOKOUT and the Mental health toolkit
 - 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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- Engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- Running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - With a disability Program for Students with Disabilities
 - In Out of Home Care
 - With other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

NSC is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team, together with the Year Level Teams, play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. NSC 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, carers and visitors 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, respected and happy at school
- Learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- Express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Participate fully in their educational program to the best of their abilities
- Display positive and inclusive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- Respect the right of others to learn.
- Uphold the school values: Respect, Responsibility, Aspiration and Resilience.

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, Year Level Coordinator, Head of Year Level, a member of the Wellbeing Team or Education Support Staff. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, NSC 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 implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate

- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

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

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of NSC is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

NSC 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.

8. Evaluation

NSC 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

NSC 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 in student handbooks so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from the General Office 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](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy <https://www.norwood.vic.edu.au/policies/>:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2024
Consultation	Student Representative Council: 19/11/2024 Wellbeing Team and Heads of Year Level Education Sub-Committee of School Council: 26/11/2024 College Council: 26/11/2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	November 2026