



“Caring for Excellence”

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If

you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact administration at Viewbank College.

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.

Viewbank 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, 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Viewbank College was formed in 1994 as a result of a merge between Banyule High School and Rosanna East High School. Both schools had a long tradition of offering an excellent education to students from Heidelberg, Rosanna and the surrounding areas.

Our school grounds sit in a mostly residential area with close access to the Banyule Flats and Wetlands. We are surrounded by a supportive community. Most students that attend our school live locally and catch the bus, walk or ride their bike to school.

The Viewbank College student population has grown significantly over the past 10 years.

Our school has become much more culturally diverse in this time. We have 34% of families having a language background other than English (LOTE), with the largest LOTE groups being Chinese (Mandarin), Vietnamese and Somali. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community and look for opportunities to celebrate this.

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

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Viewbank College is a dynamic learning community, with a focus providing high quality educational opportunities that develop the potential of all its students. Our learning environment is caring and prioritises the personal and academic growth of all students.

We build active partnerships between staff, students and parents. We value a sense of individual worth and achievement, building curious, adaptable, resilient and ethical members of the community.

Viewbank College is a lead school in promoting Respectful Relationships. At the heart of our community, our College Pledge underpins the way we relate to each other on a daily basis.

“At Viewbank College, we are committed to building respectful relationships every day. We pledge to continue to build a respectful environment that is inclusive, positive, safe and caring, promotes empowerment and strives for equity. We will honour the diversity of everyone within our community and embrace every background, experience, gender, sexuality, ability, age, culture and religion.”

Our school’s vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Viewbank College 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 access to VET programs and VCE and to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Viewbank College work according to the DET Framework for Improving Student Outcomes and use the 'Gradual Release of Responsibility' 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 Viewbank 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 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 house 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, house meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, House Leaders, Heads of House, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through Launch, production, swimming, athletics, music programs and peer support programs

- all students are welcome to self-refer to Student Wellbeing, First Aid Staff, House Leaders, Heads of House, 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
 - 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)
- Student mentor programs, 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 student will have a House Leader, an advocate who will monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their care, 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
- 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 including through small group and individualised support
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through celebrations of diversity and upholding our pledge
- 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 Learning Plan 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 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
- Viewbank College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- Literacy and Numeracy support for students identified through data collected by staff at critical times during the year. Additional teachers in the classrooms to support

Individual

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meetings with 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
- consider 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
- Engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- 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

Viewbank College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Middle School and Senior School team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Viewbank 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 to see wellbeing staff

5. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Pledge and Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with the Bullying prevention policy.

Viewbank College has developed a Positive Behaviour Matrix that outlines a four-step skills continuum that is designed to allow students, teachers and parents to be able to reflect on where a learner is currently at with skill areas involved in being able to effectively engage positively in the learning program (see Appendix 2). It can be used by students in identifying learning strengths and challenges in an ongoing way, and to identify specific things they can do to grow. Students and teachers can use this information to set meaningful goals and strategies to target key areas for growth and improvement.

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

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- speaking or behaving in a rude, manipulative, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via electronic communication or social media, or over the telephone
- the use or threat of violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening emails or messages
- sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

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 in combination with relevant reflection and education. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Verbal/written warnings to 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
- withdrawal from class
- referral to House Leader/Head of House
- issuing of an 'Official College Warning'
- restorative conversations and mediation meetings
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion
- report to Victoria Police

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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>

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

6. Engaging with families

Viewbank 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 and in school documentation on Compass
- 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 in school decision making via; the College Council and its sub-committees; various 'Friends of Viewbank' parent groups including Health and Wellbeing, Performing and Visual Arts, STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics) and Music; annual Community Forum with teachers, students and parents.
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- coordinating Year 7 parent welcome evening and house based meet and greets
- Conducting two Parent/Teacher/Student conference evenings lead by students as a way of demonstrating their learning journey
- Running information nights and online forums for students making subject choices and decisions in the school transitions and pathways
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

7. Shared Expectations - Engaging Students in a Positive Learning Environment

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.

Staff Responsibility

Staff are expected to:

- Model the College Pledge and Values and ensure a positive and respectful learning environment.
- Work collaboratively with students.
- Maintain a respectful and caring approach to students in line with our pledge.

- Establish fair and consistent practices.
- Be responsible for managing their classes and following up with restorative conversations.
- Set Classroom Rights and Responsibilities (as a reference, start with the Student Code of Conduct) with students.
- Ensure that the curriculum and teaching practices assist all students in their learning
- Create stimulating learning in the classroom.
- Acknowledge student effort and achievement with positive reinforcement and feedback.
- Communicate with parents regarding outstanding work.

In terms of attendance and in compliance with Department procedures staff will:

- Promote regular attendance with all members of the College community.
- Monitor and follow up on student absences. Alert House Leaders to patterns of absences.
- Mark the roll accurately in all classes at the beginning of the lesson on Compass.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

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 are expected to participate fully in their educational program by:

- Do their best to work to their potential.
- Complete and submit set tasks on time.
- Understand that time on task is the expectation.
- Seek help if they are having difficulties.
- Bring all required materials to class.
- Never interrupt the learning of other students.
- 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

In terms of attendance, all students are expected to:

- Come to school every school day throughout the school year.
- If students cannot attend their parents/guardian must provide a suitable written explanation, preferably via Compass, but email or written note to the College are acceptable.
- Reason for absence should be illness or circumstances beyond the student's control.
- At VCE no more than ten percent unapproved absence per unit.

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 their House Leader. They can use the Incident Report Template in Appendix 1.

Parent Responsibility

Parents are expected to:

- Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress.
- Cooperation with the College, including regular communication with the College staff regarding their child's learning and wellbeing.
- Actively support their child's engagement in the College environment.

In regards to attendance, parents are expected to:

- Ensure that their child attends school at all times when the College is open for instruction.
- Ensure that their child is on time for school each day.
- Notify the College of their child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of the child's absence and also provide a written explanation through Compass, email or written note.
- Ensure that the contact details for the child are correct and up to date.
- Check Compass on a regular basis, especially the newsfeed, Learning Tasks and attendance of their child.

8. Evaluation

Viewbank 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 Attitude to School survey data
- Other specific student surveys (eg. Respectful Relationships)
- Wellbeing Counsellor referrals/Outside agency referrals
- Incidents data
- Compass chronicle data
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Staff survey
- Case management
- CASES21 (DET administration system)
- School Online Case System

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
- Available on Compass under School Documentation
- Available on MS Teams – School Policies
- 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/carers 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:

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2022
Consultation	Staff Workshop College Council Friends of parent groups Student forums
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2024



Viewbank College
Incident Report

Name:

Date:

Year Level:

House: Hydra / Ignis / Stella / Terra

Launch Class: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 11 / 12

What happened?

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Who was involved?

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Where did this take place?

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Is there anyone else that may be affected by this incident? How?

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How are you feeling about this incident?

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How can this issue be resolved?

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Student Signature:



Positive Behaviour Matrix: 'I Engage positively with the learning program'

Learning Behaviour	Step One	Step Two	Step Three	Step Four
I can...	I can...	I can...	I can...	I can...
Manage my focus and impulsivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what distracts me from the learning and may need assistance to pause/stop. Identify when my emotions are being triggered and may need support to manage them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify when I am being distracted and stop myself from acting/reacting. Identify when my emotions are being triggered and can remain calm. Be aware of my actions/reactions and resist jumping straight in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the distractions to my learning and intentionally minimise their impact by choosing how I act. Be aware of how my actions impact others and choose to modify them as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose how and when I act based on a thoughtful and deliberate consideration of alternatives and potential impacts.
Listen attentively & find relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to the teacher at the start of the lesson. Listen to peer contributions when they are made by my friends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listen to my teacher during the formal instruction. Actively listen to peer contributions from all members of the class. Make personal connections to what is being said. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen attentively and paraphrase another person's ideas (teacher or peers). Find relevance in what I already know/can do with the new information being shared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use what I have heard to make notes, generate questions or further discussion on the topic. Make connections between what is being said and use what I know and do to transfer it to a new situation.
Accept different perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that I have a point of view Recognise the fact that others may have a different point of view to me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept that others have a different point of view to me. Consider others' point of view, with support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the pros and cons of alternative points of view. Reflect on my own information and knowledge to refine my point of view. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek differing points of view or opinions. Respectfully challenge others to consider different points of view.
Learn by myself and with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn alongside others. Share ideas and/or practise skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn with a partner. Explore ideas and practise skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn with and from others Discuss and explain ideas, skills and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach ideas and skills to others. Explain how to transfer skills and knowledge.
Persist with a learning activity/task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt learning activities with the help of my teacher. Recognise that I am having difficulties doing the learning activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try my best Attempt learning activities by myself when set by my teacher. Try again when difficulties arise. Use a resource/strategy/example that has been given by the teacher to help me continue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set myself realistic expectations. Complete learning activities set by my teacher. Use a range of resources/strategies/examples provided to complete all aspects of the task. Persevere when challenged and will try more than one way to complete the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek more challenging tasks from my teacher. Access a range of resources and strategies to tackle challenges as they arise.
Use & apply prior knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admit to myself when I don't know something. Admit to myself when I don't understand how to go about something. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the teacher and/or classmate know when I am unclear of the content being taught. Let the teacher and/or classmate know when I am unclear how to use the skill/process being taught. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seek support and information to help clarify what I don't know, understand or can do yet. Use my prior knowledge in this subject to help me understand the new information or skill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seek opportunities for extension. Draw on prior knowledge from my life experience and other subjects to help understand new learning
Strive to improve my learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept help to improve my work Read over my work and identify errors or areas for improvement (i.e. more detail) Identify the different levels on a Learning Map/Criteria Sheet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the feedback from my teacher to help improve my work. Get one or more peers to check my work. Edit my work to improve the final results and fix inaccuracies. Recognise what level I am at on the Learning Map/Criteria Sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentionally seek feedback from my teacher to improve aspects of my work. Check another's work for them and give helpful feedback. Use the Learning Map/Criteria sheet to help improve my work and check what I can do to get to the next level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek advice and feedback from others to help me improve my task. Suggest improvements to others to help improve their task. Use a Learning Map/Criteria sheet to critique my work and see how to extend myself.