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| Logo  Description automatically generated | **EMERALD 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 Emerald Secondary College on (03) 5968 5388 or email [emerald.sc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:emerald.sc@education.vic.gov.au)

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school’s policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Emerald 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, 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**

Emerald Secondary College offers a quality Secondary Education. We are located on the outskirts of Emerald in an attractive bushland environment. The College approximately has 740 students and enrolments have stabilized with expected growth coming through from the nearby Primary schools from 2018 onwards. Approximately two thirds of students travel to school on one of our school bus services.

Emerald Secondary College encourages student participation in their learning and a positive learning environment. Our college has a strong history of academic success with a high proportion of students being accepted into university or other tertiary institutions usually in equal proportions.

The College offers a very strong Pathways Program empowering students and families with the knowledge to make informed choices through senior years and post school. We offer an extensive range of vocational education opportunities including VET and three levels of VCAL. Our Select Entry Accelerated Learning (SEAL) Program has been operating since 2008 and provides a high-quality accelerated curriculum for a select group of students with high academic potential.

Emerald Secondary College has an excellent Inclusion Program that enables all students to access the quality education they deserve. The program supports both funded and non-funded students along with ATSI, Gifted and Talented, OHC, EAL and students under the protected attributes anti- discrimination act. Inclusive Education begins with a successful transition program from Grade 5 and as they enrol at Emerald Secondary College Individual Education and Learning Plans ensure that an inclusive approach to learning is a priority.

We see ourselves as part of a global learning community and our students have the opportunity to spend time in our Sister Schools in Japan as well as opportunities to engage in programs such as the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award etc.

Our college understands the need to continue to increase opportunities for Student Voice and to provide an increased range of meaningful opportunities for students to build and demonstrate their leadership capabilities. The College also understands it has an important role in promoting an understanding of all individuals regardless of their background.

1. **School values, philosophy and vision**

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure, and stimulating learning environment for all students based off Education Department policies and Child Safe Standards. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy, and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are linked.

Our school is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Our

College Vision, which was developed in 2012, states that “Emerald Secondary College is a global

learning community.” We are committed to Achieving Access to Excellence.

Our college considers itself as the school of choice in the area with a key focus on each of the following aspects of FISO with opportunities for future collaboration and leadership including:

* + Professional Leadership
  + Positive Climate for Learning
  + Community Engagement in Learning
  + Excellence in Teaching and Learning

1. **Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognize that some students, as a group or individuals, may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

Emerald Secondary College works collaboratively with students and parents/carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school’s values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

Emerald Secondary College is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that supports all students. Students engaged in their learning often have better relationships with teachers, peers, families, and the wider community.

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* + Poor literacy and numeracy skills
  + Negative parental experience of education
  + Bullying and harassment
  + Drug and alcohol use
  + Young people acting as carers
  + Transitional schooling
  + Poor attendance
  + Mental and physical health concerns
  + Generational poverty

Emerald Secondary College staff demonstrate inclusive teaching and learning practices at a school- wide, targeted, and individual level. At Emerald Secondary College we expect our teaching and learning strategies to enhance and support the behavioural and emotional wellbeing of our students.

Universal

* + high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
  + prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
  + creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging, and supportive
  + welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
  + analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
  + deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
  + teachers at Emerald Secondary College use a Set, Connect and Reflect as their 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 Emerald 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
  + 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. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, 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 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
  + programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. cyber safety)
  + opportunities for student inclusion

Targeted

* + each year group has a Co-ordinator, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
  + all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
  + connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
  + all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
  + Emerald 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:

Emerald 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.

1. **Identifying students in need of support**

Emerald 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. Emerald 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

1. **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, racism, 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

1. **Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school’s Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Emerald Secondary College’s Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Emerald Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department’s policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores, and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

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

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

* warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
* teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
* withdrawal of privileges
* referral to the Year Level 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 Emerald Secondary College 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.

1. **Engaging with families**

Emerald 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.

1. **Evaluation**

Emerald Secondary College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

* student survey data
* incidents data
* school reports
* parent survey
* case management
* CASES21, including attendance and absence data
* SOCS

Emerald Secondary College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

**COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

* Available publicly on our school’s website
* Included in staff induction processes
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department’s policies at:

* [Suspension process](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/guidance/1-suspension-process)
* [Expulsions - Decision](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/guidance/decision)

**Further information and resources**

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

* [Attendance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy)
* [Student Engagement](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-engagement/policy)
* [Child Safe Standards](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy)
* [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supporting-students-out-home-care/policy)
* [Students with Disability](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy)
* [LGBTIQ Student Support](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy)
* [Behaviour - Students](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/policy)
* [Suspensions](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy)
* [Expulsions](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy)
* [Restraint and Seclusion](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

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

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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| --- | --- |
| Policy last reviewed | 25/11/22 |
| Consultation | School Council 25/11/22 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | 25/11/24 |