



SURF COAST SECONDARY COLLEGE

Student Engagement Policy

Policy Statement

Surf Coast Secondary College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Surf Coast Secondary College prohibits corporal punishment in all instances. 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 inextricably linked.

It is fundamental to acknowledge that each teacher is a vital source of support and a determinant in the success of their students. The teachers at this school will work collectively to ensure that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning. This school recognises the need to be engaging and inclusive, recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning and intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs. Our school strives to be a learning community where students and teachers can relate well to each other, and where different ideas and viewpoints are valued and respected.

Diversity and Inclusion

Surf Coast Secondary College strives to provide access to high-quality schooling that is free from discrimination based on gender, language, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, religion, health or disability.

All schools should be supportive and engaging places for all school community members, as this allows us to build communities that value, celebrate and respond to diversity.

There are a number of different events that are recognised each year at the College, with the intention of raising the awareness of our school community. These events include IDAHOT Day, White Ribbon Day, Harmony Day, Cultural Diversity Week, NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week, ANZAC Day, Education Week, Mental Health Week, Remembrance Day, R U OK? Day, and International Women's Day.

To formalise our commitment to fostering tolerance and respecting diversity, in 2016 the College signed the Safe Schools pledge, committing to create an environment that is safe and inclusive for all students. Tackling bullying and discrimination in all its forms is vital in ensuring that all students feel safe and included at school. Students who do not feel safe or included cannot learn effectively.

Also refer to: [The Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)

Guidelines

- The school will focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success
- The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management approach based on Restorative Practice techniques and philosophies
- The school will encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children
- The school's curriculum will include explicit teaching of pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement
- The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment

- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners
- The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate their wellbeing and progress
- The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support
- The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support

School-wide Positive Behaviour Support is an evidence-based framework comprised of practices and systems for establishing positive school cultures, learning and individual behaviour supports needed to achieve academic and social success for all students.

Surf Coast Secondary College's values of STRIVE, UNITE, RESPECT, FLOURISH are articulated in all aspects of school life – in the learning environment, in the school groups and in the community. These values are explicitly taught to and recognised in students.

(See Appendix A for Surf Coast Secondary College's School-Wide Positive Behaviour Matrix.)

The key focus will be on prevention and early intervention strategies that:

- define and teach school-wide positive behaviours
- establish consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- establish processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/or behaviour difficulty
- provide school-wide and classroom processes for ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empower students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- provide a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

Restorative Practices

The school is committed to the use of Restorative Practices with students. Restorative Practices offer an alternative way of thinking about addressing discipline and behavioural issues and offers a consistent framework for responding to these issues. This is much more than just a behaviour management tool. Schools that work restoratively find that relationships are stronger and learning is more effective and so there is less need to resort to sanctions and punishment to 'manage' behaviour.

Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

Curriculum

The curriculum programs of the school will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the school's students by:

- accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning
- intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs

The school is committed to the delivery of an inclusive curriculum that ensures all our students have access to a quality education to meet their diverse needs.

To improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities, the following key strategies are in place:

- providing parents/carers with a learning program that best suits their child's needs
- involving students and parents in programming and planning decisions
- supporting students' access to programs that let them pursue achievable pathways
- ensuring the expertise of teachers working in our school is maintained and developed

The school's strategies to promote pro-social values will be whole-school in focus and include close links with curriculum. The Victorian Curriculum includes the learning domain of Personal and Social Capability which is essential in enabling students to understand themselves and others, and manage their relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively.

Learning Mentors

Caring for our students to support high learning outcomes is a priority. Each student has a Learning Mentor, who works with them to ensure the development of effective learning skills and also acts as a key support person for each student. In the Middle Years these mentors are part of the FUSE Program, with dedicated 'SURF Time' allocated to this mentoring program. In the Senior Years this mentoring is provided through the 'Networks' Program, which has regular scheduled sessions throughout the term.

Student Voice

Student voice is about valuing people and valuing the learning that results when we engage the perspectives of multiple voices in the school. It focuses on realising the leadership potential inherent within all learners.

The school promotes active student participation as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change. Student participation ranges from young people sharing their opinions of problems and potential solutions through leadership positions or in focus groups. It also includes our students sharing their voice by collaborating with teachers to improve education outcomes, including helping to improve teaching, curriculum and teacher-student relationships and leading to changes in student assessment.

Parent and Carer Involvement

The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning. The school will ensure that the unique experiences and skills of our students' families enrich the learning environment and the school community.

The school will create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities via the Compass platform
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- providing opportunities to enhance parenting knowledge and skills

Involvement in our school by parents and carers helps children achieve the best possible learning outcomes. Parents and carers will be provided with the opportunity to participate in school life, both

formally and informally, through channels such as school council, volunteering and staying up to date with news about what is happening in education via our newsletter.

Attendance

The school will promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

- articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
- adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
- following up student absences promptly and consistently
- implementing data-driven attendance improvement strategies
- creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning
- providing early identification of, and supportive intervention for, students at risk of non-attendance
- linking with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support

Students at Risk

The school will use coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. The school will provide the following support structures as appropriate:

- monitoring of, and responding to, protracted student absences
- trauma management plan
- protocol for mandatory reporting
- student support groups

The school will utilise relevant external student wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- Psychologist for psychological and/or learning assessment
- Student support programs
- Mentors – providing support for 'at risk' children
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- ChildFIRST
- School Focused Youth Service
- Social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- Youth agencies
- Relevant DET support staff
- CASA [Centre Against Sexual Assault]

Student Engagement Data

Longitudinal data will be collected regarding frequency and types of welfare issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some sources of data are:

- The Student Attitudes to School Survey data
- School level report data
- Parent survey data
- Advice and observations from Wellbeing staff, Learning Community Leaders, teachers and mentors
- Personal information gathered upon enrolment
- Engagement with students' families
- Compass allows our school to easily identify students who exhibit characteristics that are known to increase disengagement at school. Risk Factors identified via Compass include:
 - Poor attendance
 - Academic performance, in particular, literacy and numeracy assessments
 - Behavioural and relationship difficulties
 - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
 - Refugee or EAL status
 - Presence of a disability

- Presence of diagnosed learning disorders
- Experience of significant health issues, including mental health issues.

Links and Appendices (including processes related to this policy)

Appendix A: Surf Coast Secondary College Student Engagement Process Documents

Links which are connected with this policy are:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/wholeschoolengage.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/addsupport.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/attendance.aspx><http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/sfys.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/studentbehaviour.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/conduct.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx>[Equal Opportunity Act 2010](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[Disability Standards for Education 2005](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[School Accountability and Improvement Framework](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[Education Training and Reform Act 2006](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

[VIT Teacher Code of Conduct and Ethics](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/oohc.aspx)

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Evaluation Due: 2017

Behaviour Matrix

At Surf Coast Secondary College
we strive, we are united, we are respectful and we flourish.

In the learning environment	In the school grounds	In the community
<p>we strive...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to learn new things to set and achieve goals to do everything to the best of our ability 	<p>we strive...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to be fair to be mindful of others and our environment to be kind and considerate of others 	<p>we strive...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to make a positive difference to take responsibility for our actions to give back to our community
<p>we are united when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we learn from each other we learn together we are open-minded about others' opinions and suggestions 	<p>we are united when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are friendly and inclusive we look out for each other we are tolerant of difference 	<p>we are united when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we take pride in our school we represent the school positively we take part in school activities
<p>we are respectful when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we listen and are polite we are aware of others we look after our own and others' equipment 	<p>we are respectful when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we keep our school beautiful we welcome visitors we respect our own and others' safety 	<p>we are respectful when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we look after our environment we are mindful of others we embrace diversity
<p>we flourish when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we grow as individuals we accept opportunities and challenges we recognise and celebrate our successes 	<p>we flourish when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we share experiences with others we build and strengthen relationships we value the differences in others 	<p>we flourish when...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are good citizens we actively contribute to our community we are proud of our community