



# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

## 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.

Red Cliffs 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

Red Cliffs Secondary College caters for all students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Whilst many families represent the agricultural and horticultural development of the surrounding areas, others reflect the range of professions found in the district. The College provides comprehensive and sequential courses for all years in the key curriculum areas: English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Humanities, the Arts, Health and Physical Education. At VCE and VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) levels, students can select courses which guarantee pathways to

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further studies at University and TAFE, training and employment. A range of VET subjects are available for students both onsite and through our education providers.

The College has a very successful program involving the Arts, particularly Music, Drama, Dance and Media Studies. All students have frequent opportunities to perform publicly at such events as Speech Night, Mildura Eisteddfods, drama our annual variety performances at the Mildura Arts Centre and community functions.

Red Cliffs Secondary College is dedicated to developing and caring for the whole student, which is why we have a comprehensive curriculum, a broad co-curricular activities program, a clear student management policy and a dedicated well-being team. All areas work together to provide the best outcomes for all students.

Year 11 and 12 students have their own private study area and Year 12 students have their own common room. All students have access to a dedicated wellbeing centre, staffed by a social worker, chaplain and school nurse. A doctor's clinic is open one day a week as part of the Doctors in Secondary Schools Program.

Since the start of 2014, the College has administered a centre for young people who have disengaged from education, learning or the workplace. Located in the Mildura CBD, FLO Connect works closely with numerous agencies to provide opportunities for disengaged youth to reconnect with learning. Red Cliffs SC teaching staff work alongside Mildura Rural City Council youth workers with 55 young people making their way back into education aged 12-18.

## **Our Vision:**

To develop resilient, compassionate, successful citizens.

## **Our Values:**

- **Resilience:** We approach all challenges with a growth mindset.
- **Compassion:** We are caring, considerate and demonstrate empathy toward others.
- **Success:** We persist to achieve our goals and aspirations and recognise growth.
- **Citizenship:** We are active and engaged members of our school and wider community.

## **Our Expectation:**

All members of the school community will model our vision and values to promote the social, emotional and educational growth of students, teachers, families and the wider community.

Our Statement of Values is available online via the school's website

## **2. Engagement strategies**

Red Cliffs 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 whole of school, targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

## **Whole of School:**

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers

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- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing, utilizing the School Wide Positive Behaviours model.
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive through use of the Berry Street Education Model, and promotion of the school values.
- 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 Senior School curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students can choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Red Cliffs Secondary College use an 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 Red Cliffs 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, through the Compass portal, formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- opportunities for student leadership are available through the positions of College Captains, SRC Executives, Values Ambassadors, First Nations Ambassador, Inclusion Ambassador and House Captains. These students meet regularly with staff to provide a student perspective to the running of the school and are integral to the dissemination and promotion of the school's values to the student body.
- students can 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, Home Group Teacher, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through performances, athletics, music programs, home group and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Level Coordinators, Sub-school 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 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
  - School Wide Positive Behaviour model

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- Berry Street Education Model
- BRAVE
- Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address specific behaviours (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

## Targeted

- each year group has a Year Level Coordinator, a 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
- 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 have an Individual Education Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Red Cliffs 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

- *Student Support Groups, see:*  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spaq/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- *Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, FBA plans*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services*
- *referral to Child First, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Lookout*

Red Cliffs 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 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

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- 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
  - Koorie students
  - EAL students
  - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

### 3. Identifying students in need of support

Red Cliffs 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Red Cliffs 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

### 4. 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

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- 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.

## 5. Student behavioural expectations

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 Red Cliffs Secondary College's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Red Cliffs 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
- referral to the Sub School Leader
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

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

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## 6. Engaging with families

Red Cliffs 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.

## 7. Evaluation

Red Cliffs 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

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related policies, including Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Bullying Prevention, Child Safe Standards, can be found on the College website.

## REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and is scheduled for review in September 2022. It was ratified at College Council on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.