

# 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.

Bendigo South East 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

### School profile

Bendigo South East College (BSE) is a large co-educational year 7 to 10 school 175 kilometres North West of Melbourne. The College is part of a cluster of year 7 to 10 schools within the Bendigo area providing shared programs in music, sport and student support services. Students generally complete their studies in years 11 and 12 at Bendigo Senior Secondary College.

The College was established from the partial merger of Golden Square Secondary College and Flora Hill Secondary College in 2009 as part of the Bendigo Education Plan. The construction of new buildings and their occupation by students has been ongoing since 2009. Many aspects of the College have undergone considerable change including the physical learning environments (in the form of large, open plan classrooms), staffing profiles, teaching practices, and education ethos and vision.

Significant resources have been provided for new teaching and learning facilities. The BSE learning model, utilising web based technology, has been developed and is central to personalised approach. Staff are well aligned in their understanding and commitment to the concept of the growth of 'EVERY' student which drives the positive nature of student learning.

Enrolment has increased to well over 1500 students. The Student Family Occupation (SFO) index of 0.44 suggests that student performance means are expected to be in the upper 30% of State results. The College caters for approximately 4% of students who have language backgrounds other than English. Bendigo is a regional area for refugee settlement and an increasing number of students of Burmese background attend the College. There is a small program for students with disabilities (PSD).

#### School values, philosophy and vision

Our vision is committed to ensuring every student develops the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to positively contribute to the world community as a responsible and caring citizen.

We encourage students to strive for excellence – to achieve more than is required or expected academically, vocationally, socially and personally.

Our College is a community, which promotes harmony, participation, friendly competition and opportunities for contribution, recognition and celebration.

We value the uniqueness of every human being. We teach the importance of love and respect, empathy, forgiveness, the need to work for peace and justice, honesty and loyalty.

Our values hold focus at each year level:

- 7 Teamwork** - Working together to achieve shared aspirational goals.
- 8 Respect** - Treat others with consideration and regard and be respectful of the rules within a community
- 9 Appreciation** - Be generous in actions and words towards everyone who contributes to our world
- 10 Leadership** - Accept we all have a role to play in modelling, contributing and serving others.

We are committed to embedding our values as habits so that they become observable Attributes;

- Readiness
- Resourcefulness
- Resilience
- Reflectiveness
- Reciprocity

Our Year 10 Graduate is ideally a young person who:

- has a global perspective with an understanding of Australian culture and qualities
- has the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to succeed and contribute in a global community
- is articulate, confident, respectful and appreciative
- has excellent teamwork and leadership skills
- is resourceful, resilient, reflective and ready to take up opportunities
- can use reasoning skills to face real-world challenges and embrace opportunities
- is a fine ambassador for the College, their family, country and themselves

### Engagement strategies

Bendigo South East 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.

### 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 extra literacy classes, VET programs & VCE to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations

- teachers at Bendigo South East 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 from grade 6 to year 7 and from year 10 to future studies
- 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 Leader, 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
- The student support centre has two full time qualified social workers who have a role of engagement. Students who have low attendance, are homeless, need assistance with mental health etc are referred to the engagement officers via the year level leaders.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Bully Stoppers
  - 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)
- buddy programs, year 10 leadership mentoring

### Targeted

- 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 Koori students with a Koori Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment if appropriate

- Bendigo South East 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/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, Behaviour Escalation Plans, DET attendance referrals
- Program for Students with Disabilities- screening, assessments, consultation, funding applications
- referral to Student Support Centre and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace, Anglicare
- Lookout involvement for all students in OoHC

Bendigo South East Secondary 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
- referral to Student Support Centre, referrals to outside agencies, 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

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, linking students with poor attendance with an engagement officer, referring to DET if attendance doesn't improve
- 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

Bendigo South East 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. Bendigo South East 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 including from the previous school
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, behaviour and suspension data
- engagement with families & support agencies
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

### 2. 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, 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.

### 3. 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 Bendigo South East's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Bendigo South East 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 Leader
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

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

#### 4. Engaging with families

Bendigo South East 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 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.

#### 5. Evaluation

Bendigo South East 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

### REVIEW CYCLE

- This policy was last updated on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 and is scheduled for review in June, 2020.
- Approved by School Council: 24.06.19