



## Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact a member of the Leadership Team.

### 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.

Albert Park 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. Provision of reasonable adjustments
6. Student rights and responsibilities
7. Student behavioural expectations and management



- 8. Engaging with families
- 9. Evaluation

## Policy

### 1. School Profile

Albert Park College is an inner-city school that was established in 2010. We have 1645 students enrolled from Years 7 to 12 and 206 school staff members, consisting of 133 teaching staff and 73 educational support staff members.

Our school is in close proximity to the bay and South Melbourne beach, an area with rich Bunurong/Boon Wurrung history. Our school does not have sweeping grounds and ovals and is instead spread across our local community with five registered campuses. Most of our students live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. In being front-and-centre within the Albert Park and Port Melbourne community, Albert Park College has developed close ties to the local community and makes use of the various grounds, parks, halls, and other spaces across the locality.

Our school is culturally diverse with 15% per cent of families having a language background other than English (LOTE), with the largest LOTE groups being Vietnamese French, and Hindi. The school also has representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

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

Over-arching the values of Albert Park College is the principle that students are at the centre of everything we do. Our Statement of Values is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our wider school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, integrity, and kindness at every opportunity.

Our school values are:

#### A Positive Culture

- we are positive, open and encourage a 'can do' attitude
- we celebrate a diverse range of skills and achievements
- we encourage our students into higher education and training
- we display leadership.

#### Community & Partnership

- we respect, support and nurture those around us



- we are fair, consistent and clear
- we are actively engaged in a partnership of learning that includes students, teachers, parents and the wider community to maximise learning.

#### Knowledge

- we respect knowledge, skills and creativity
- we are open to new methods of teaching and learning
- we challenge students to be their best at academic, sporting and artistic pursuits
- we promote a culture of excellence in everything we do.

#### Environment

- we teach students to be global citizens
- we teach skills for the future
- we aim for an environmentally sustainable school.

#### International-mindedness

- we respect nations and cultures different from our own, and value our place in a global context
- we build local, national and international partnerships to support learning.

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.

Our Statement of Values is available online on the [school website](#).

### **3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Albert Park 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.
- Positive relationships between staff and students is prioritised, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing.
- Culture is inclusive, engaging, and supportive, and it embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued.



- All parents and carers are welcome and regarded as partners in learning.
- A range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data is analysed.
- A broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE, VM, and IB are offered to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths, and aspirations.
- Teachers use an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common, and shared model of instruction is used to ensure that evidenced-based, high-yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
- Teachers adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths, and needs of students; these follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- The school's Statement of Values and Charter of Respect are incorporated into curriculum and promoted to students, staff, and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of the school community.
- Carefully planned transition programs take place 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 in communication to parents.
- Student attendance is monitored and attendance improvement strategies are implemented 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 and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Positive Education Leaders, Assistant Principal, and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Opportunities exist 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 Positive Education Leaders, First Aid Officer, Mental Health Practitioner, 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.
- School-wide positive behaviour support is used with both staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Safe Schools
  - Positive Education
  - Man Cave and Flourish Journey
  - Project Rockit
  - Satellite Foundation
  - Minus18.



- Programs, incursions, and excursions are developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs, proactive support from Victoria Police).
- Opportunities for student inclusion are offered (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities).
- Buddy programs and peer support programs are established.
- 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 year group has at least two Positive Education Leaders, senior teachers 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.
- 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 – refer to the [Marrung Strategy](#) for further information.
- English as an additional language students are supported through EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in the school.
- Learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds are supported through SSS services with the Department of Education.
- A positive and respectful learning environment for students who identify as LGBTIQ+ is in place.
- The school follows the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ+ Student Support](#) including the facilitation of a Pride Club and other activities and measures established to foster inclusion and diversity.
- 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 the appointment of a Case Manager, 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 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 apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma.
- Students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#).
- All students are assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.
- Albert Park College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan.

## Individual

Albert Park 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:
  - o school-based wellbeing supports
  - o [Student Support Services](#)
  - o appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
  - o Re-engagement programs such as [Navigator](#).

Other strategies:

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)

Other Department programs and services:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

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:
  - o with a disability
  - o in Out of Home Care
  - o with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

#### **4. Identifying students in need of wellbeing support**

Albert Park 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.

#### **5. Provision of reasonable adjustments**

Albert Park College will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any senior secondary students with additional needs or a disability that are seeking to access a senior secondary course. The college will consider the following information to determine whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made:

- the nature of the student's special needs or disability
- any adjustments that have previously been provided
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

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- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers or parents.

The information gathered will enable school staff to better understand the young person in a case-managed approach and allows for reasonable adjustments to be made for students with learning or behavioural difficulties.

From time to time reasonable adjustments or special provision will be required for Senior Secondary assessments and exams, a list of possible adjustments is provided below:

- rescheduling school-based assessment tasks
- extra time to complete assessment tasks
- extra reading time, writing time, rest breaks
- alternative format exam papers (e.g. enlarged print, Braille)
- replacing a task with a task of a different kind
- using a single task to assess more than one of the learning outcomes
- using technology (e.g. laptops), integration aides, or other special arrangements
- extensions of time to complete folio and production items.

Reasonable adjustments or [Special Provision](#) may also be granted for examination arrangements:

- extra reading time, writing time, rest breaks
- alternative format exam papers (e.g., enlarged print, Braille)
- use of assistive technology
- a reader and/or scribe
- a clarifier
- alternative examination venue (e.g., separate room, home, hospital)
- receiving a derived score for external examinations where a student has been ill or affected by personal circumstances.

## **6. 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 Charter of Respect 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](#).

## **7. Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's [Charter of Respect](#).

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our [Bullying Prevention Policy](#).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Albert Park 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 implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as 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 Positive Education Leader
- restorative practices
- suspension



- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- expulsion.

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- [Suspensions Policy](#)
- [Expulsions Policy](#)
- [Restraint and 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 Albert Park 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.

## **8. Engaging with families**

Albert Park 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 [Parent Portal](#)
- 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
- supporting a families group (Albert Park College Community Association (ALPACCA)) in the running of networking and connection activities at in the community
- 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.

## **9. Identifying students in need of extra support**



Albert Park College will ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

Albert Park College will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any senior secondary students with additional needs or a disability that are seeking to access a senior secondary course.

Albert Park College will consider the following information to determine whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made:

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- a clarifier
- alternative examination venue (e.g., separate room, home, hospital)
- receiving a derived score for external examinations where a student has been ill or affected by personal circumstances.

## 10. Evaluation

Albert Park 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.

Albert Park 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.

## 11. 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](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ 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 and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy.](#)

**Policy Review and Approval**

Created date	September 2016
Policy last reviewed	August 2024
Consultation	Staff: August 2024 Student Representatives: August 2024
Endorsed by	Principal Team
Next scheduled review date	August 2026