700 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & WELLBEING		
700 Student Engagement & Wellbeing		
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This document:
1. was produced in consultation with the school community
2. is to be read in conjunction with *Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

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1. School Profile Statement

Wodonga Senior Secondary College encompasses Years 10 – 12 as the structure of the whole College. It is managed by an Assistant Principal: Student Engagement and year level staff called Pathways Coordinators, who with the Careers teachers; Vocational Education, Post School Options, Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) , and Vocational Education & Training (VET) Coordinator and the Student Wellbeing Coordinator make up the College Pathways Team.

The fundamental goal of the Senior College is to provide students at Wodonga Senior Secondary College with an exemplary academic, co-curricula and personal support program that ensures they achieve at the highest possible level and move successfully on to post college options.

This goal is underpinned by the following approaches:

- Emphasis on high standards of behaviour, responsibility and achievement
- Encouragement to develop leadership roles with other students, middle years and primary schools and through extra-curricula involvement
- Provision of a superior academic and extra curricula program providing extension and enrichment opportunities for all students
- Promotion of the college and student achievements in public forums
- Development of the Senior College staff as a team working towards common goals
- Access to a range of educational programs catering for diverse student interest
- Ongoing counselling and monitoring of student choices for post College options
- Access to support in the development of healthy and effective independent living skills

These approaches are brought together in a structural framework known as 'Pathways' which combines course offerings, with a focus on the needs of individual students as monitored via individual counselling.

The aims of the Pathways approach are:

1.
   a) To develop the concept of the Senior College as an integration of year levels, course options and subjects that provides pathways for students to post-college options
   b) That these pathways enable changes of direction as well as provide students with a clear understanding of where they can be heading

2.
   a) To develop a system of advising students through individual programs and monitoring that maximises their potential (personal, academic, career, etc) which is supported by a framework of extra-curricular and support programs
   b) That students are individually case managed, advised and assisted from the latter part of Year 9 at the Middle Years College and throughout their Senior College experience to achieve their potential
   c) That the senior college personnel share the task of advising students and monitoring their caseloads. Where appropriate, other personnel or providers become involved
   d) That the Senior College personnel undertake ongoing Professional Development in Careers advice and course options
   e) That records of individual student case management be maintained on the School Information Management System (SiMs) under Pathways and updated as appropriate
   f) That staff take a pro-active approach to the running of support programs so that they are determined by student need as derived from pathways feedback and meetings
   g) That appropriate support programs and personnel be involved in developing life skills and personal development activities

3.

a) To establish an understanding of the Senior College as a System that can be monitored and evaluated against set aims and criteria and to develop appropriate and consistent strategies to achieve this
b) That staff, students and parents are made aware of the structure, purpose and goals of the Senior College and be invited to contribute to its development and refinement

2. Whole-School Prevention Statement

The Senior College recognises that we are preparing young people for their adult lives. We develop student social competencies by embedding such learning opportunities into our pedagogy, curriculum, behaviour management systems, expectations and structures. Our positive school culture ensures that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning. The Senior College is 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. Student engagement and school connectedness underpin effective student learning.

With this philosophy in mind, the following statements underpin our policies:
- Creating a positive school culture that is fair and respectful
- Building a safe and supportive school environment
- Expecting positive, supportive and respectful relationships that value diversity
- Promoting pro-social values and behaviours
- Encouraging student participation and student voice
- Proactively engaging with parents/carers
- Implementing preventative and early intervention approaches
- Responding to individual students
- Linking to the local community
- Developing students as global citizens

3. Rights and Responsibilities

3.1 Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

3.2 Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

Under the act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:
- age
- breastfeeding
- gender identity
- impairment
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status or status as carer
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity

- sex
- sexual orientation
- personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).

3.3 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:
- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and a reputation free of unlawful accusation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural Rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:
- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

3.4 Students with Disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, Parents/Carers of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student

and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

3.5 Bullying and Harassment

Definitions
- **Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

- **Bullying** is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

- **Cyberbullying** is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings)

  Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:
  - teasing and being made fun of online, via text messaging, etc.
  - spreading of rumours online, via text messaging, etc.
  - sending unwanted messages, photographs, videos, etc. via email or text messaging etc.
  - defamation/slander (to damage the reputation of a person or group by saying or writing bad things about them)

  Cyberbullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

Guidelines
It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

The effects of harassment or bullying include:
- teasing and being made fun of
- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.
Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Subtle: (The most common)
They include:
- Offensive staring and leering
- Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference
- Racist or smutty comments or jokes
- Questions about another's sexual activity
- Persistent comments about a person's private life or family
- Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body
- Offensive name calling

Explicit: (obvious)

They include:
- Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc
- Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography
- Requests for sexual favours

Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

Bullying can involve such things as
- Grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching, kicking, pushing and shoving
- Publicly excluding a person from your group
- Taking or breaking a person's property
- Knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- Teasing a person because of their looks

Cyberbullying

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:

- The language you use and the things you say
- How you treat others
- Respecting people's property (e.g. copyright)
- Visiting appropriate places

Behaving safely online means:

- Protecting your own privacy and personal information (we used to call it 'stranger danger')
- Selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- Protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- Being proactive in letting someone know if there is something is 'not quite right'. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher

Student Action
If you are being harassed or bullied you should:
- Tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop and/or
- Discuss the matter with a student leader, a teacher/coordinator or another staff member that you feel comfortable with. Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated

confidentially.

If you see someone being harassed or bullied you should:
- Tell the person bullying to stop and/or
- Report the matter to a teacher, coordinator or Assistant Principal. Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

Teacher Action
- **It is an expectation that staff will respond immediately to incidents of bullying and uphold the basic beliefs**
- Any alleged incident of bullying will be documented using the College's SIMS program and referred to the relevant Year Level Coordinator
- Students involved will participate in a Student Support Group meeting arranged by the Year Level Coordinator, aimed at finding a way for students to co - exist harmoniously, and to explain the problem to the students in terms of feelings. Each student involved will have an opportunity to have input into suggestions for possible solutions. Agreed solutions are incorporated into an agreement or contract designed to stop the bullying.
- Sanctions and support should be arranged if the problem continues or is extreme in its initial action.

Bullying Consequences and Support

Possible Consequences	*Possible Support Strategies*	*Consequences and support should be arranged by the Year Level Coordinators, with assistance from an Assistant Principal, Wellbeing Team or external agencies as required*
- Warning - Parent Notification - Detention - Community Service - Suspension - Expulsion	- All teachers made aware of concerns - Individual or group counselling - Conflict resolution meetings - Peer mediation - Student Support Group Meeting - Parent meetings	

3.6 Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Rights and Responsibilities of Students	
Rights	**Responsibilities**
Students have a right to: - work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition - participate fully in the school's educational program	Students have a responsibility to: - participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. - Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. - As students progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals. - Students should, with support, be expected to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians	
Rights	**Responsibilities**
parents/carers have a right to: • expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged	Parents/carers have a responsibility to: • promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours • Ensure their child's regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning • support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers	
Rights	**Responsibilities**
Teachers have a right to: • expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student	Teachers have a responsibility to: • Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy • Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively • Know the content they teach • Know their students • Plan and assess for effective learning • Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments • use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning

N.B. Teachers rights and responsibilities should be read in conjunction with the Teacher Roles and Responsibilities classroom poster

4. Shared Expectations

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole-school community. Shared expectations are:

• Jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students
• Clear and specific
• Focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
• Focused on prevention and early intervention
• Supported by relevant procedures
• Consistent, fair and reasonable
• Linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

4.1 Values

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

The school's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values, for Australian schools, which are:
1. **Care and Compassion -** Care for self and others
2. **Integrity -** Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
3. **Doing Your Best -** Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
4. **Respect -** Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view

5. **Fair Go -** Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
6. **Responsibility -** Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
7. **Freedom -** Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
8. **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion -** Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others
9. **Honesty and Trustworthiness -** Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

School expectations include:

- Inclusive teaching practices
- Accessible educational provision for all students
- Parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- Community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- Provision of appropriate student services
- Development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning

4.2 Latter Years Approaches

The school is committed to preparing its students for their imminent transition to work and adult study therefore as latter years students, they are expected to be familiar with the expectations of society and its institutions and understand that there are consequences for inappropriate actions. Personal responsibility, mediation and restorative practices are all applied with students where appropriate. These approaches:

- 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)
- 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)
- promote an understanding of expectations in work places and society

4.3 Diversity in the school community

Wodonga Senior Secondary College is committed to positioning its students to successfully take their place in a globalised world. To that end the College has undertaken the following:

- Established an International Student Unit
- Fostered student involvement in international exchange programs
- Initiated international student study tours
- Gained accreditation for the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program
- Ensured access for all students to computers in their homes
- Established an accredited English Language Centre
- Offered an extensive range of subjects and course offerings catering for diverse interest and abilities
- Established an extensive individualised Pathways approach to support each student through the college
- Employed a Koori tutor under the Wannik program
- Employed a Defence Force Mentor for students of defence force families to support their transition into and out of the college
- Employed a College Chaplain
- Engaged psychological support services for students

- Developed a range of structured workplace learning experiences as curricula and co-curricula programs
- Developing an active and responsive Student Leadership Program

The school aims to address diversity by:

- maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
- attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems

The school aims to celebrate diversity by:

- promoting student achievements at school and year level assemblies, through the media and exhibitions and through student run programs with and for the community: eg Adopt a school programs, VCAL structured workplace learning, Hair and Beauty Salon and Restaurant open to the public, Visual Art exhibition, Performing Arts concerts and productions
- developing a series of multicultural festival celebrations to run throughout the year

5. School Actions and Consequences

5.1 Positive Relationships

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- Establishing predictable classrooms and school environments
- Ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- Providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- Consistently acknowledging all students
- Recording positive behaviours and contributions to the school community on the SIMS
- Providing recognition of student achievement through assemblies, certificates and presentation nights
- Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making i.e. school council representatives, SLC Committee, Education Sub-Committee
- Providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

5.2 Staged Response – Support Strategies

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- Understanding the student's background and needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Structuring the student's learning program
- Maintaining records of inappropriate behaviours on the SIMS

Broader support strategies will include:

- Involving and supporting the parents/carers
- Involving the student wellbeing coordinator, managed individual pathways or careers coordinators

- Tutoring/peer tutoring
- Mentoring and/or counselling
- Convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- Developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- Providing broader educational programs, for example 'on the job' learning, work education, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- Involving community support agencies

5.3 Discipline Procedures – Suspension and Expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the Department guidelines published in **Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines** . Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures.

A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Rule reminder and explanation of consequences
- Seating plan or change of seat within a class
- Student/teacher conference after class
- Phone contact with parents
- Attendance and behaviour cards
- Providing students with a suitable uniform
- Withdrawal of privileges (e.g. camps, excursions, sporting trips, etc.)
- Exit from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.
  When a student is exited, parents/carers should be informed within 24 hours of such withdrawals by the classroom teacher
- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.
  Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes
  The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers
- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required)

5.4 Immediate Suspension

Where the health, safety and/or wellbeing of themselves or others are at risk or where severe behaviour continues despite previous interventions being enacted and the consequence of suspension has been communicated and where the duty of care of the college has been compromised:

Such behaviours include the use of illegal substances, absence from the college without permission, refusal to follow reasonable instructions, aggressive behaviour, inciting violence, harassment, breach of acceptable use of IT equipment, vandalism and theft.

A support group meeting will be convened with parents and students following the suspension.

When student behaviour deems exclusion as a consideration, the College can facilitate offsite learning through our Learning Management System as an alternative to expulsion.

Expulsion would be seen as the most extreme consequence and will only be implemented according to the Department Student Engagement Policy Guidelines.

6. References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf