



Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

1. BACKGROUND & 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, supportive and engaging learning environment for all 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.

Apollo Bay P-12 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.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

- A. School profile
- B. School values, philosophy and vision
- C. Engagement strategies
- D. Identifying students in need of support
- E. Student rights and responsibilities
- F. Student behavioural expectations
- G. Engaging with families
- H. Evaluation

3. IMPLEMENTATION

A. School profile

Apollo Bay is a beautiful coastal town located on Victoria's iconic Great Ocean Road and enveloped by the majestic Otway Ranges. The town's rich surrounds have attracted a community with a strong commitment to a healthy and active lifestyle, the natural environment and the arts. This commitment is reflected in our College educational programs and motto "*Unique Environment, Extraordinary Opportunities*". Our College is strongly supported by its students, parents and the wider community, with all playing an extensive role in establishment of our school values of 'Excellence', 'Respect', 'Integrity' and 'Balance'. While Apollo Bay P-12 College is classified as a rural and remote school, with an annual enrolment of around 275 students from Prep to Year 12.

The College is geographically isolated, being the sole provider of primary and secondary education within Apollo Bay and the surrounding district. Our nearest neighbouring schools are at least a 45-minute drive away.

Our College is committed to developing in all its students the capacity, desire and tools to achieve their best in all endeavours. We work hard to foster a strong sense of awareness, responsibility and respect in our students from a global perspective right through to family and the local Apollo Bay community. With an emphasis on individual personal growth, we support, encourage and promote across our school community the pursuit of excellence and are guided by a culture that is dynamic and able to embrace new ideas, opportunities and challenges to improve learning and equip our students with the skills to meet the demands and opportunities of the 21st century. The College also participates fully in the community by developing strong, supportive and respectful relationships and partnerships with a range of diverse community groups locally, and within the broader region and State.

In 2018, our VCE student results ranked Apollo Bay P-12 College as the highest achieving non-select entry government school in Victoria. This result reflects the College values described above and is a source of enormous pride for our students, teachers and the wider Apollo Bay community.

B. School values, philosophy and vision

Please refer to our School Philosophy Policy.

C. Engagement strategies

Apollo Bay P-12 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 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
- 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 VET programs, VCE, VCAL, and electives across Years 3 to 9, to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Apollo Bay P-12 College use our Learning Cycle 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 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, 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. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Head of Junior or Senior School, 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 specific cross-age activity days
- all students encouraged to self-refer to the School Nurse, teachers, Junior and Senior 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 are proud to 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*
 - *Bully Stoppers*
 - *Safe Schools*
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address specific learning areas and/or specific behaviours e.g. cyber safety, bullying awareness etc.
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs

Targeted

- each year group has a Homegroup Teacher, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their class, 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 (MIPs Plan)
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in out-of-home care will be appointed a Designated Teacher, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Apollo Bay P-12 College assists students to plan their Year 10 and 11 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

Apollo Bay P-12 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, where needed, to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports, including the school nurse
 - DET Student Support Services
 - Lookout program for students in out-of-home care
 - 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 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
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

D. Identifying students in need of support

Apollo Bay P-12 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. Our school 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

E. 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.

F. 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 Apollo Bay P-12 College's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, as detailed in our Behaviour Management Plan, our school 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 Head of Junior, Senior School, Assistant principal or Principal
- 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.

G. Engaging with families

Apollo Bay P-12 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 Communication 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.

4. EVALUATION

Apollo Bay P-12 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

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the College's ANNUAL review Cycle.

DEFINITIONS: NA

REFERENCES:

DATE RATIFIED: Term 3 2019

DATE FOR REVIEW: Term 3 2020

Tiffany Holt

Principal

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