



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.

Benalla 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.

SCOPE

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

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POLICY

1. School profile

Benalla P-12 College is situated in the regional town of Benalla, 200 km north-east of Melbourne. Benalla has a population of approximately 9000 people which is relatively stable at the moment. Our school enrolments were 851 in 2021 and have been declining slowly over recent years. The College is organised into 4 separate campuses on different locations in the town. There are two P-4 campuses - Avon Street (120 students) and Waller Street (180 students). There is a 5-6 campus at Clarke Street with 140 students, and all the secondary students are located at the Faithfull Street site where the enrolment is around 420. The College has an Executive Principal and 4 Assistant Principals. FTE

Teaching staff was approximately 70 in 2020 with an additional 41 FTE ES staff. The College has an SFOE of approximately 0.57 and is placed in the 'High' band, indicating a high level of socioeconomic disadvantage in the area. Many of our students travel in by bus from surrounding areas and small towns, however, the majority of our students come from the town of Benalla. Our College values are Respect, Responsibility, Integrity and High Expectations.

With a strong values base, Benalla P-12 College is a student centred school designed to maximise the learning opportunities of all students, with a strong focus on the three stages of learning: Early, Middle and Senior.

The school has high expectations and aspirations where success pathways are achieved for all. This will be achieved within a personalised learning approach where explicit teaching occurs at the point of student need, with assessment guiding the next stages of learning and where resources required to meet those needs are provided. The learning community will work in a resource rich environment consistent with contemporary 21st century education.

Students will be active participants in setting their learning goals in collaboration with parents, teachers and significant others.

They will have supportive members of staff working with them at all times. They will be confident, resilient individuals who value learning and relationships. They will understand and appreciate the needs of others in their learning and personal development. They will act with integrity and learn the value of community and school participation. They will understand their place in the world and the opportunities it can provide.

Staff will model these behaviours and communicate these expectations to students at all times. Staff will be active learners in their profession and offer exemplary teaching and learning opportunities individually and as part of teams. Parents and families are recognised as key to student success and should be actively involved in supporting their education

School values, philosophy and vision

1. Respect, Responsibility, High Expectations and Integrity are the core values. Respect for self, Respect for others and Respect for the Environment, Responsibility for Behaviour and Effort. High Expectations in regards to learning and Integrity within the school and wider community. Our school mission is committed to encouraging the best in its staff, students, and community. We aim to nurture a passion for lifelong learning. Our vision is to ensure that every child learns and is prepared for the future through a commitment to excellence in teaching, high expectations and positive relationships in a safe and inclusive environment.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://benallap12.vic.edu.au/vision-and-mission-statement/>

2. Engagement strategies

Benalla 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 and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers at Benalla P-12 College use our teaching cycle as our 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 Benalla P-12 College adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse, 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 Leadership Group (SLG) and other forums including year level meetings and Student Focus Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school athletics, swimming, music programs and peer support programs.*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Group 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*
 - *Bullying No Way*
 - *Safe Schools*
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. behaviour management programs)*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)*
- *buddy programs.*

Targeted

- *each secondary year group has a Year Level Coordinator. Part of their role is to 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 9 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 be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *Benalla P-12 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

Benalla 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 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 Child First*
 - *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 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*
 - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*
 - *Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)*

3. Identifying students in need of support

Benalla 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. Benalla P-12 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 staff*
- *Information obtained by carers or 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
- 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 and management

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 Benalla P-12 College's Bullying policy.

Incidents in the yard are closely monitored by staff on duty. Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible. The College will implement disciplinary

consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, removal from the yard, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Benalla P-12 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 detention, 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 Year Level Coordinator/ Sub School Leader/Campus AP*
- *restorative practices*
- *detentions*
- *behaviour support and intervention meetings*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

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

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-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 Benalla P-12 College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

Classroom Management Processes

Teacher follows classroom management plan.

- First warning
- Second warning; Student moved to another part of the room or area next to room.
- If behaviour continues or is dangerous the student is removed from class. This is done by the use of an exit teacher at secondary level.

Prep to Grade 6

After three warnings

- Student exited to predetermined 'buddy' classroom or other supervised area with pre-prepared work sheets.
- Classroom teacher to have a restorative conference with the student at the next break.
- Classroom teacher contacts home on the day the student is exited from class to organise an after-school reflection (either on the day or the following day) to complete the work they missed when they were misbehaving.
- Classroom teacher fills in a notification report on Compass and notification goes to the Campus Principal.

Years 7 to 12

After two warnings

- Student exited by an exit teacher to another classroom with a behaviour reflection sheet to complete, as well as pre-prepared work sheets as required. Student remains there until the end of the lesson.
- Teacher must contact the exit teacher or general office, or send another student to inform them a student is required to be exited from class.
- The classroom teacher contacts home to inform parents or carers that the student had been exited from class and informed of the subsequent detention/reflection. The teacher also records the incident and reflection on compass.
- The teacher meets with student at the end of the lesson or as soon as practicable for a restorative conference, to discuss the behaviour and the completed behaviour reflection sheet. (The purpose of this conversation is to restore the relationship and focus on the behaviour not the 'bad' student). The restorative may be held with the sub-school leader or the coordinator if required by the student or the staff member.
- If a student is exited from the class, there is an automatic reflection/detention arranged and supervised by the teacher for the student to complete the work unfinished and to re-build the relationship.
- If the student is refusing to attend detention/ reflection, the sub-school is available to assist. The teacher is required to contact parents and discuss the incident after the detention/reflection.

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices are an integral component of classroom behaviour management at Benalla P-12 College. Restorative conversations are used to repair the relationship within the learning environment to ensure that there is a safe and orderly learning environment. Restorative conversations also allow those involved to become remorseful and change their behaviours in the future.

The aim of restorative practices includes:

- Provide an opportunity to reinforce school values.
- All participants have a sense of justice and fairness.
- Participants gain an insight into the impact of their behaviours on others.
- A healing of hurt and a repairing of the damaged relationship.
- Continue to offer support and a sense of belonging.
- An opportunity to develop a sense of community where all in the learning community are valued.

Repeated removal from class requires a parent meeting and the formation of a student support group meeting.

Continued removal from class or other transgression may result in suspension. This may be either 'in school' or external. One-off cases e.g. physical violence, theft or drug abuse may also lead to suspension. All suspensions will require a parent meeting to review the student's individual learning plan.

***Suspension procedures must follow the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, Ministerial Order 6.**

6. Engaging with families

Benalla 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 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

Benalla 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Benalla P-12 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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and available to staff on Compass.
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Basis for discretion:

The basis for discretion lies with the Principal as an operational matter.

<i>Compulsory</i>	<i>School Council Ratification Required</i>	<i>Date Implemented</i>	<i>Reviewed</i>	<i>Due for Review</i>
Yes	No	May 2015	October, 2021	October, 2023