



# Kew High School

## Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

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### 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.

Kew High School 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. Student rights and responsibilities
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### POLICY

#### School profile

Kew High School is a high performing co-educational school located in the inner eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The school was established in 1963 and continues to proudly provide an outstanding, holistic education to students of the local community. Kew High School comprised of approximately 1100 students and 90 equivalent full-time staff. The staff include 3 Principal Class members, 70 equivalent full-time teachers and 25 education support staff. The school prioritises high expectations and places students at the centre of a comprehensive learning and teaching program. The Kew High School motto is: ASPIRE, STRIVE, ACHIEVE and the values of the school are founded in the first word of the motto, ASPIRE. Students and Staff are deliberately and actively guided by the

values of Accountability, Social Equity, Participation, Integrity, Respect and Excellence in all aspects of school life.

### **School values, philosophy and vision**

At Kew High School, our vision is to provide an outstanding holistic education that supports and encourages every student to aspire, strive and achieve.

Kew High School students and staff are confident, generous people who feel connected to the school and its community. Our mission is to provide a learning and teaching program that is centred around students as active learners who are able to take responsibility for and direct their learning.

Kew High School is a community that believes strongly in its well-established culture of educational excellence and high achievement in all areas of learning.

Our students aspire to reach their potential within a culture of integrity, social equity, and respect for themselves and others. They know that by continually striving to be their best they build their capability to participate positively and productively in all areas of society.

The values of Kew High School ask every student to ASPIRE through:

- Accountability
- Social Equity
- Participation
- Integrity
- Respect
- Excellence

These six values underpin every aspect of the teaching and learning environment and are embedded in the daily life of our school.

Our classroom learning norms are framed by these values. Students are accountable for their learning, they participate with respect and integrity, and they strive towards excellence.

Our school-wide positive behaviour framework is based on our values. Students act with integrity, they respect themselves and others, and they recognise the importance of social equity in our diverse community.

These values are explicitly taught, and are celebrated across our school. They provide an easily accessible moral framework for students and promote a challenging learning environment and a supportive and inclusive school community.

### **Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Kew High School 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
- 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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 the VCE, VCE Vocational Major and the Victorian Pathways Certificate to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Kew High School use the Kew Learning Model 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 Kew High School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning capabilities, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy 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 including year group meetings and Peer Support 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 plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Senior Counsellor, 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
- students can make self-referrals or referrals for other students via the online self-referral tool available through the Star menu on Compass.
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, to explicitly recognise and build positive behaviours that are informed by our school values
- programs, incursions and excursions are developed and implemented to address issue specific needs or behaviours
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Peer support program and Peer mentoring/tutoring program

- 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. An online Bullying reporting tool was created for students to access via Compass to report all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour to year level coordinators.

### Targeted

- each year group has two Year Level Coordinators, 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 through the development and implementation of Individual Education Plans, Career Action Plans and ongoing support from our Individual Pathways Coordinator and Marrung Lead
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ as outlined in our LGBTQIA+ Student Support Policy and follow the Department's policy
- 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 being appointed a Learning Mentor, 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 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
- 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 from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- Kew High School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

### Individual

Kew High School 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, a Behaviour Support Plan and/or a Ready to Learn Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
  - school-based wellbeing supports
  - Student Support Services
  - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst/Orange Door
  - 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 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:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

### Identifying students in need of support

Kew High School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Kew High 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 or parents
- referrals from Year Level Coordinators or Sub School Teams
- referrals from the Student Services Team

### 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, 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.

## **Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Our expected behaviours are outlined to students, staff and parents and carers through our Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Matrix.

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.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Kew High School 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 implement 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
- 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 Kew High School 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.

### Engaging with families

Kew High School 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 through the Compass Parent Portal
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

### Evaluation

Kew High School 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

Kew High School 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 and through the Compass Parent Portal
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department’s policies at:

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

## 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](#)
- [LGBTIQ 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 Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2024
Consultation	KHS LT, School Council, Student Representative Council
Approved by	Acting Principal – Jane Thornton
Next scheduled review date	November 2026