
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.

Outdoor School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students, regardless of gender, sexuality, cultural background or family circumstance. This applies to all school staff, students, families and community members including LGBTBI people who identify as same sex attracted, intersex or gender diverse. 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.

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1. School Profile Statement

Outdoor School is a multi-campus (15 Mile Creek & Bogong) residential school within the Department of Education and Training. Outdoor school is also a member of the Residential Outdoor Schools Association. The school's educative purpose - "Developing future ready young people" - is realised by outdoor learning and a live-in program that focuses on personal, social, critical thinking, environmental and sustainability domains of the Victorian Curriculum.

Bogong Campus

The Bogong Campus caters for approximately 1700 students per year, predominantly by offering 5 to 12 day residential programs to Year 7-12 students from across Victorian government schools. Our students generally attend as a cohort of 24 or 48 students and are accompanied by Visiting Teachers from their home school. Our students represent a cross-section of Victorian enrolments in many aspects. They bring a diverse range of cultural backgrounds and socio-economic statuses. Our home schools vary from small rural P-12s, to larger secondary colleges in regional centres, to urban secondary colleges in excess of 1000 enrolments.

The recently developed Future Makers program aims to develop future-ready young people by educating them for sustainable living. Bogong endeavours to forge lasting relationships with government schools through a three-year contract. It targets Year 9 student cohorts who are

engaged in the Future Makers curriculum over a 10-week period. During this time students attend the Bogong Campus for a 12-day period, which incorporates a 5-day off-site journey. It is anticipated that factors such as the extended program, more conscripted enrolment and the demands of a longer journey will precipitate greater personal and group tension.

15 Mile Creek Campus

15 Mile Creek Campus caters for approximately 1800 students per year, predominantly by offering 5-day residential programs to Year P-12 students from across Victorian government schools. Our students generally attend as a cohort of 24 to 48 students and are accompanied by Visiting Teachers from their home school. Our students represent a cross-section of Victorian enrolments in many aspects. They bring a diverse range of cultural backgrounds and socio-economic statuses. Our home schools vary from small rural P-12s, to larger secondary colleges in regional centres, to urban secondary colleges in excess of 1000 enrolments.

At 15 Mile Creek, students develop a deeper connectedness with the natural environment. We design and implement educational programs that cater for students from Prep – Year 12. These residential programs are primarily 5 days in length and individually negotiated with schools.

Schools are able to choose programs from seven distinct learning branches.

These include Knowing Nature, Challenge and Grow, Leadership, Exploring Environments, Applied Learning, Back and Beyond and VCE units. These are explained fully on our website. At 15 Mile Creek, students' learning is based upon interactions in the natural world, 15 Mile Creek aims to:

- Develop in students an understanding of our relationship with the environment, others and ourselves.
- Inspire curious and adventurous learners who can transfer this knowledge, skill and disposition to actively contribute towards a sustainable world.

Our curriculum is driven by Victorian Curriculum, VCE, VCAL & VET frameworks. Our students engage with the curriculum through outdoor learning opportunities from an Outdoor Education perspective. This includes adventure activities, nature education activities and learning aligned with educating for sustainability.

Outdoor School has, for many years, acknowledged high levels of student engagement through anecdotal evidence, student and visiting staff feedback and the Student Attitudes to School survey data.

2. School Vision, Educative Purpose and Values

Vision: Educating for Sustainable Living.

Educative Purpose: To build Future Ready Young People.

Values: Respect, Integrity, Community Participation and Educational Excellence

3. Whole School Based Strategies

Outdoor School employs the following strategies in order to provide a supportive and positive learning environment:

- The School's values of Respect, Integrity, Educational Excellence, and Community, promote positive and respectful interactions between all members of the school community.
- Pre-program information for students, parents and staff at home-schools clearly outlines rights, responsibilities and the student Code of Cooperation.
- Our programs focus on the development of personal and social capabilities.
- The training of staff in Restorative Practices, and their ability to use the framework helps build robust relationships and repair relationships when harm occurs. 15 Mile Creek staff

have all participated in this professional learning and are beginning to utilise this strategy. The School Leadership Team is also prioritizing professional learning for all teaching staff.

- Group Teachers place importance on developing a respectful and positive relationship with students during Student Intake.
- Our staff work closely with Visiting Teachers to ensure that student needs are identified and met.
- The rostering of AM and PM Duty Officers and the use of a communication software program ensure staff are aware of student issues and updated as frequently as required as student needs change.
- The School's Campus Principals, Program Managers and Group Teachers establish contact with parents and home-schools when necessary.
- Students have access to public services such as "kids help line", "Lifeline" and "Beyond Blue".
- The diverse curriculum offered at Outdoor School includes a broad range of engaging activities, community responsibilities and give-back opportunities as well as opportunities for gardening and woodworking.
- Outdoor School, through its curriculum and subsequent learning tasks, creates a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive.
- The school looks at analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attitudes to school survey, visiting teacher survey data, student management data and school level assessment data.
- Our school's 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.
- Outdoor School challenges gender stereotypes and bias, promotes gender equity, challenges disruptive behaviour; and offers positive female role modelling.
- Whole of school strategies are developed to facilitate the needs of staff, students, families and community members including LGTBI people who identify as same sex attracted, intersex or gender diverse.

4. Individual Based Strategies

- Each group has a group teacher and home school teacher that are responsible for their group, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support.
- All students will be assisted to develop specific goals and targeted actions that plan for future actions.
- Connect all Koorie students with an Outdoor School Koorie coordinator.
- All teaching staff will undertake professional development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year.
- Teachers will build constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- Teachers create a safe space for students if they are seeking confidential advice and support on any issues relating to family violence, sexual harassment or sexual assault.
- Program Leaders will 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

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- 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
 - 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

5. Rights and Responsibilities

Our Students have a right to:

- Learn in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe
- Stimulating learning opportunities
- Organised and committed staff

Our Students have a responsibility to:

- Treat other people with respect
- Be a contributing member of the School community
- Act in a receptive ready to learn mode
- Behave in a correct manner according to the school's trademark behaviours and Code of Cooperation

Our Staff have a right to:

- Be respected
- Teach in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe
- Be supported
- Access DET guidelines

Our Staff have a responsibility to:

- Ensure duty of care is provided for each student
- Follow the DET/VIT professional code of conduct
- Engage students in effective learning
- Teach effectively and ensure that feedback is given
- Teach to the School curriculum

Our Parents have a right to:

- Access the school and their child (unless there is a court order that says otherwise)
- Know that their child is in a physically and emotionally safe and supportive environment
- Information about their child and input into their child's learning

Our Parents have a responsibility to:

- Inform the School about their child
- Provide a safe and supportive home environment
- Support their child in the learning process

- Support the education and values provided by the School

6. Shared Expectations within Our Community

The School expects all students and staff to uphold the values outlined above.

Value	Expectations of Students	Expectations of Staff	Expectations of Parents/Carers
Respect	<p>Act fairly with care and compassion towards all</p> <p>Actively listen and acknowledge perspectives of others</p> <p>Show empathy towards others</p> <p>Arrive on time with all equipment needed for activities</p>	<p>Show fairness and act with care and compassion towards students</p> <p>Use a calm tone of voice</p> <p>Acknowledge positive behaviour</p> <p>Show empathy towards students</p>	<p>Inform the school of any relevant information or issues that the school should be aware of in order to properly cater for their son or daughter</p>
Integrity	<p>Be honest in all situations</p> <p>Be reliable, dependable and trustworthy</p> <p>Take responsibility for actions</p> <p>Look after and manage own and school property</p> <p>Speak up when something is wrong</p>	<p>Be honest in all interactions</p> <p>Be reliable, dependable and trustworthy</p> <p>Act in a responsible manner and hold students accountable for their actions</p> <p>Arrive on time and well prepared for activities</p>	<p>Support the school values</p>
Community	<p>Establish and maintain genuine, positive and supportive relationships</p> <p>Be inclusive in interactions with other students</p> <p>Work collaboratively with other students</p>	<p>Establish and maintain genuine, positive and supportive relationships with all staff, students & schools</p> <p>Celebrate and value all people in an inclusive manner</p>	<p>Work towards establishing genuine, positive and supportive relationships with the school</p> <p>Work collaboratively with staff towards a shared vision</p>

		Acknowledge and work collaboratively with a shared meaningful vision	
Educational Excellence	<p>Be optimistic and positive</p> <p>Adopt an adventurous attitude to initiate & undertake new & daring challenges</p> <p>Strive for resilience in adapting to challenges</p>	<p>Model optimistic and positive behaviour</p> <p>Adopt an adventurous attitude to initiate & undertake new & daring challenges</p> <p>Encourage resilience in adapting to challenges</p> <p>Deliver our curriculum in a professional & rigorous manner</p>	<p>Support their child by encouraging a positive and optimistic attitude.</p> <p>Encourage their child to undertake new & daring challenges</p>

7. School Actions & Consequences

Outdoor School has developed a Code of Cooperation that outlines expected student behaviour and incorporates a framework for addressing lapses.

Implementing the Code of Cooperation

- Students are to be made aware of the Outdoor School Code of Cooperation prior to attending all programs.
- The Restorative Practices framework will drive the resolution process.
- The staff involved will decide the appropriate level of action, taking into account the visiting school’s policies.
- Consequences that are firm, fair, and contribute to building positive relationships and repairing harm will be sought when resolving issues through the restorative process.
- It is acknowledged that resolutions and consequences may differ from incident to incident as individual circumstances change.
- **Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the School under any circumstances.**

The following strategies may be employed when resolving behaviour misdemeanours:

- GTs & VTs can remind, restate and redirect the offending student.
- Restorative circles and scripts that involve all affected parties can be used.
- Behaviour agreements can be written outlining expected behaviour and consequences for repeat offending.
- Group conferences can be used to address the behaviour within a group or an entire School cohort.
- Students can be referred to the Program Manager or Campus Principal depending on the seriousness of the misdemeanour.
- Students can be referred to the School Principal, who may refer the matter to outside agencies such as police, counsellors and human services when it is deemed appropriate.

- Consequences such as temporary withdrawal from program, restrictions during non-program time, direct supervision, suspension from program and the expulsion from School can also be considered depending on the situation.

The Student Expectations document, which outlines staged responses to misbehaviour, is currently being reviewed.

8. Discipline Procedures – Suspension and Expulsion

We will only exclude a student 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. This will be done in consultation with the visiting school and taking account of their policy and procedures.

In applying consequences for unacceptable behaviour, both the individual circumstances and actions of the student and the needs and rights of school community members will be considered at all times. Consequences are applied to provide the opportunity for all students to learn, to ensure the safety of staff and students, and to assist students with accepting responsibility for their actions.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from program 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. Where appropriate, parents or carers will be informed of such withdrawals.
- Detention: This is not relevant to our school.

Suspensions – guiding principles

When the principal determines that a suspension is justified, a Student Support Group meeting will be convened to provide a Notice of Suspension, explain the reasons for suspension, detail the school days on which the suspension will occur and where the suspensions will occur, provide contact details for additional support services, and develop a Student Absence Learning Plan that outlines school work to be undertaken during the period of suspension.

In the case of a student putting the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students at significant risk, the principal may suspend a student immediately, scheduling a Student Support Group meeting within 48 hours of the student being suspended. When a student is suspended it will be for the shortest time necessary. If the suspension is for five days, a post-suspension Student Support Group meeting will also be scheduled.

In determining whether to implement an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension, we will consider the educational, social and emotional impacts on the student and the school community.

Expulsions – guiding principles

The principal may expel a student if, while attending school or travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school (including travel to and from that activity), the student does anything for which they could be suspended and their misbehaviour is of such magnitude that, having regard to the need of the student to receive an education compared to the need to maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of other staff and students at the school and the need to maintain the effectiveness of the school's educational programs, an expulsion is the only available mechanism.

A Student Support Group meeting will be convened to explain the expulsion and provide the student and parents or carers with a Notice of Expulsion. Transition arrangements will then be implemented for the continuing education, training or employment of the expelled student.

9. Supporting Documents

The Student Engagement Policy should be read in conjunction with:

Student application

Acceptable use of technology agreement

Cyber-safety policy

Anti-bullying policy

School Values

Code of Cooperation

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed and updated May 2018.