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.

Saltwater 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

Saltwater College is a co-educational Prep to Year 9 school that opened its doors to the first intake of Prep to Year Six students in 2019 and will grow rapidly until 2024 at which time the school will be P-9. Saltwater College is positioned within a thriving bayside community, located only 20kms from the city. Situated in tranquil Point Cook, it's surrounded by the Point Cook Coastal Park, a protected marine sanctuary and the Cheetham Wetlands. Designed with the community in mind, residents at Saltwater can enjoy access to a state-of-the-art Lifestyle Centre, with three pools, a gym, function room, bar and a café. There are also over 120 acres of parklands with BBQ facilities, playgrounds and picnic areas.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Saltwater College aims to build a school culture that demonstrates a strong belief in and a commitment to providing a rich and rigorous curriculum within a safe, secure and enriched learning environment for our children. We will have a clear focus on catering for the diverse range of students at their point of need. We will strive to be internationally minded, and provide a supportive, nurturing and challenging learning environment, with high expectations for student success.

The school's values will be aligned with the Department of Education's philosophy: 'We support students to reach their potential, regardless of their background, postcode or circumstance, and to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to participate and thrive in a complex economy and society'.
The Community at Saltwater College will live by this set of values, where an understanding and respect of all cultures and beliefs will be an essential characteristic of productive and compassionate citizens of the third millennium.
Saltwater College will not just be a school committed to high academic standards, it will also be a school that prepares students to be curious, critical and creative thinkers and problem solvers who are technologically literate and capable of bringing about positive change in the world in which we live. This will be underpinned by our school motto: 'Wisdom Begins with Wonder'.
Another major feature of our school's curriculum will also be around the establishment of an exclusive Performing Arts and Sporting Program which will foster students intellectual, social and physical development.

VISION

We provide more than just an education to prepare students for success in an ever changing world.

MISSION

To education and guide intelligence and character in order to live creatively, ethically and productively.

OBJECTIVE

Saltwater College objective is to:

- Offer high quality education within a supportive and understanding environment
- Develop critical and creative learners who actively engage in the learning process to acquire knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes
- Encourage cultural understanding and acceptance of diversity
- Encourage communication in both social and academic environments between all members of the community.

VALUES

In order to achieve our vision and mission, we as a community of learners at SaltwaterP-9 College, welcome the challenges of the third millennium by developing in each of our students the capacity to embrace the characteristics of a well-educated and internationally minded person.

The Profile of the Third Millennium Learner

The community at Saltwater College will strive to exhibit and foster a distinctive set of attributes. These qualities, embodied in the International Baccalaureate's Learner Profile, prepare students to make exceptional contributions at school and beyond.

Learners strive to be:

- Caring
- Knowledgeable
- Inquirers
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-minded
- Risk-takers
- Balanced
- Reflective

Attitudes:

To develop these attributes, students will learn to embrace and adopt the following attitudes into their daily school life:

- Appreciation
- Commitment
- Confidence
- Cooperation
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Empathy
- Enthusiasm
- Independence
- Integrity
- Respect
- Tolerance

1. **Engagement strategies**

Saltwater 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 the International Baccalaureate's Primary Years Programme to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Saltwater College will use High Impact Teaching Strategies framework to ensure an evidence based, explicit, common and shared model of instruction is incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Saltwater College will 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 various forums including year group meetings and student leadership groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Leading Teachers, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principals 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 encourage school wide positive behaviour with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Respectful Relationships
    - Bully Stoppers
    - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities).

Targeted

- each year group has a Unit Leader and Leading Teacher, 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
- 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 will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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

The school will utilise relevant external student wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- psychologist for psychological and academic assessment
- mentors – providing support for 'at risk' children
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- youth agencies
- local parent support groups
- relevant DEECD support staff
- C.A.S.A. [Centre Against Sexual Assault]
- School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)

For Student Support Groups, see:

- http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to Child First, Headspace
- Navigator
- Lookout

Saltwater College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These 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.

2. Identifying students in need of support

Saltwater 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 help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Saltwater 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 peers
- [Amend to include other referral pathways]??

3. 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.

At Saltwater College our aim is to develop a robust learning community with positive management and engagement strategies that enable the highest level student learning outcomes. In terms of student engagement and wellbeing, we strive to:

- build a positive and orderly learning environment with clear student routines and high expectations for behaviour and uniform
- build positive and professional staff-student relationships
- communicate clear expectations about attendance, participation and positive social behaviours
- maintain effective partnerships with key agencies and student support services.

Rights and responsibilities

Equal Opportunity

We recognise and accept the equality of men and women and people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age. Under the Equal Opportunity Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against a person based on their age, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, impairments, marital status, parental status, physical features, political beliefs, pregnancy, race, religious beliefs or personal associations.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

We respect and promote the following four basic principles of human rights and responsibilities: freedom, respect, equality and dignity. When making decisions, we act compatibly with human rights and consider each of the following: the right not to be discriminated against; the right to privacy and reputation; the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief; and cultural rights. Staff, students and parents understand that with human rights comes a concomitant responsibility to respect the human rights of others.

Students with Disabilities

As detailed in the Disability Standards for Education, we are committed to making reasonable adjustments to accommodate a student with a disability, balancing the interests of all parties affected including those of the student with the disability, the school, staff and other students.

Bullying and Harassment

See our separate Anti-Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and Anti-Harassment Policy.

Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Our school rules, values, rights and responsibilities are prescribed so that students can enjoy a safe learning environment and actively pursue high levels of academic achievement and social and emotional development, with a view to becoming well-adjusted life-long learners. We are committed to building and maintaining a cooperative and supportive partnership between home and school to achieve positive outcomes for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have a right to:	Students have a responsibility to:

• learn in a safe and secure environment where they can fully develop their knowledge and skills without intimidation, harassment, bullying or cyber-bullying • participate fully in the school's educational program • receive reasonable assistance to resolve school-related problems • receive ongoing communication and feedback about their progress.	• follow the Code of Conduct, staff instructions and uniform requirements • take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning • display positive behaviours, including courtesy, care and respect for the rights of peers, teachers and all members of the school community • care for the school environment • attend school regularly and participate fully in learning programs • develop into independent learners who set and achieve learning goals and manage resources effectively.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Rights	Responsibilities
Parents and Carers have a right to expect that their child will be educated in a safe and secure environment where courtesy, care and respect for the rights of others are promoted.	Parents and Carers have a responsibility to: • ensure their child's prompt arrival and regular attendance at school • show an active interest in their child's schooling and progress • initiate and maintain regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning, engagement and wellbeing, including notifying the school of student absence as soon as reasonably possible • display and model positive behaviours and values.

Rights and Responsibilities of Staff (Teachers and School Leadership Team)

Rights	Responsibilities

Staff have a right to:
• teach in an orderly and collaborative environment
• be informed about matters relating to students, within privacy restrictions, that may affect the teaching and learning program for students.
	Staff have a responsibility to:
	• follow the VIT Teacher Code of Conduct, Saltwater College Professional Code of Practice, Professional Standards, and uphold an active, professional and positive presence, including Professional Learning.
	  ✓ consistently and fairly implement the Code of Conduct
	  ✓ display, model and teach the school values and positive social behaviours
	  ✓ acknowledge student efforts and results in both curriculum and behaviour
	• set the scene at lesson commencement and clearly communicate expectations
	  ✓ implement effective teaching strategies and use assessment data to drive teaching and learning
	  ✓ create and maintain safe and stimulating learning environments

	• initiate and maintain regular and constructive communication with students and parents about learning, engagement and wellbeing • organise connections for students with appropriate student services.

Shared Expectations

As a school community, we have a shared commitment to creating and maintaining a safe, stimulating and orderly learning environment that ensures all students can engage effectively in their education.

As a high priority, we will progressively develop a core set of school values with the school community upon the opening of the school. These values will be aligned with the human rights listed above: freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

We bring our school values to life through our behaviours and interactions with each other. We will display and model our school values through behaviours such as the following:

- Attending school on time and arriving promptly to each lesson
- Preparing properly for school and for each lesson
- Meeting appearance, dress and uniform standards
- Moving safely through the school environment
- Participating fully in learning activities
- Attentively following instructions
- Listening to each other
- Treating each other with respect, courtesy and fairness
- Valuing the particular individual strengths and differences of others
- Inclusive teaching and learning practices
- Demonstrating and monitoring our own learning progress
- Attempting learning tasks to the best of our ability
- Making appropriate choices, even without supervision

Essential Agreements

An engaging and collaborative learning environment is the most obvious aspects of effective teaching. At Saltwater P-9 College all classrooms create an essential agreement at the beginning of the year. For that matter Saltwater College creates essential agreements for every team, working group and for the whole school in fact.

Essential agreements are not a set of rules and directions, instead essential agreements state what the shared norms and expectations are. It is a collaborative action by all those involved in that classroom or team to outline what environment will help everyone learn and achieve at their best.

School Actions and Consequences

We encourage and support high levels of student attendance, engagement, learning and positive behaviours through a consistent set of whole-school practices, including the following actions:

- Establishing a safe, secure and inclusive learning environment
- Developing, modeling, teaching and encouraging a set of core school-wide values, rights and responsibilities and shared expectations
- Acknowledging positive behaviours and celebrating effort and achievement
- Discouraging inappropriate behaviours
- Empowering students to be involved in school decision-making and leadership activities
- Applying professional judgment to particular cases and incidents, and understanding individual students, their life circumstances and their particular learning and wellbeing needs
- Identifying students at risk of disengagement from learning in a timely manner
- Monitoring, measuring and communicating progress with students and parents in a timely manner
- Rigorously monitoring, recording and following up student absence in a timely and rigorous manner
- Implementing evidence-based early intervention processes and programs and regularly reviewing their effectiveness to ensure continued relevance
- Using out-of-class support strategies and Student Support Groups for students with at-risk behaviours, to repair relationships and to develop agreed goals and plans around learning and behaviour. In convening Student Support Groups, key stakeholders will be involved as needed, including parents, teachers, principal class officers, counsellors, psychologists and youth workers
- Connecting to external student support services as appropriate
- Ensuring that students who have displayed unacceptable behaviours towards others can repair the relationship – for example by apologising, completing a reflection form and catching up on missed work
- Implementing effective and supportive transition programs and processes into and out of the school, including student transitions between different learning areas and levels within the school

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.

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 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. Where appropriate, parents or carers will be informed of such withdrawals
- Detention: a student may be required to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or undertake other duties at a reasonable time and place, as instructed by their teacher. No more than half the time allocated for any recess or lunch break will be used for this work, and in the case of an <u>after-school detention, students will be detained for no more than 45 minutes.</u> Students will be fully supervised during detentions. Parents or carers will be informed at least the day before the after-school detention and where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship, we will endeavour to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents or carers.

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.

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.

Engaging with families

Saltwater 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.

4. **Evaluation**

Saltwater 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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on May 2021 and is scheduled for review in May 2024.