Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy

Rationale:
Maffra Secondary College has the responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are: valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, can engage effectively in their learning and experience success whilst developing socially and emotionally. Wellbeing at Maffra Secondary College is seen as students being happy, healthy and safe in an inclusive environment. Student engagement refers to a student’s academic and social participation in education, their sense of belonging or connectedness to the school, their investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation to be lifelong learners. This policy is based on the principles we value at our College: Respect, Learning, Environment & Community. This Policy is underpinned by the following areas:

Rights and Responsibilities:
Every member of the Maffra Secondary College community has the right to participate fully in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with rights that reflect dignity, freedom, respect and equality (Charter of Human Rights). This school has procedurally fair processes for managing student behaviour. Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment will not be used at this school under any circumstance. The following responsibilities for staff, students and parents include:

Students
- Are expected to participate fully in the school’s educational program and to attend regularly. Students are expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.
- Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn and will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.
- As they go through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.

Teachers
- Should know the content they teach as well as how students learn and how to teach them effectively.
- Plan and assess for effective learning.
- Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.
- Treat poor behaviour as a learning issue and promote improvement in behaviour rather than punishment.
- Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

Parents
• Should promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress and by modeling positive behaviours.
• Ensure their child attends school regularly.
• Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning.
• Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support – Engagement in Learning:

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support – Engagement in Learning (SWPBS-EL) is based on our College values system of: RESPECT, LEARNING, ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITY. It underpins our entire behaviour management system. It is a framework that focuses on using positive acknowledgements and language to establish the expectations of the College community.
The Wellbeing leader will lead the SWPBS-EL team and assist with its continued implementation throughout the school by coordinating / leading the:
• Development and implementation of a Positive Behaviour Matrix
• Delivery of explicit teaching of Expected Behaviours.
• Direction of interventions and support systems that are developed – This will be data driven
• Consistent approach to a 6:1 ratio of acknowledgements versus punishments
• Consistent approach to school expectations and processes and the adoption of these by both students and staff.

Restorative Practice:

Maffra Secondary College is committed to the use of Restorative Practices with students. Restorative Practice is a no blame approach to fixing a problem whether the issue is minor or something more significant. At Maffra Secondary College we promote and use Restorative Practices as a system to reflect on what we have done and a way in which we can restore relationships with both students and staff.

Restorative Practices:
• Are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999).
• Promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002).
• Involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b).
• Promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001).
• Are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person’s rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

Bullying and Harassment:
• Harassment - is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to any person.
• Bullying - is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.
• Cyber-bullying – is a form of covert bullying. It is like other forms of bullying, in that it is a relational problem where communication technologies are used intentionally, repeatedly and antagonistically to harm another person or group.

At Maffra Secondary College we provide a safe, inclusive and empowering learning environment for students and staff to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in doing so, all members of our school community will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or teach, and the right to feel safe and secure in this environment. Any form of cyber-bullying will not be tolerated at any level. The aim is to:

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• Reinforce within the school community what constitutes bullying (including cyber bullying), and that any form of bullying is unacceptable.
• Encourage and inform everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and cyber bullying and to have a responsibility to report it whether as a victim or observer.
• Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and cyber bullying are investigated appropriately and that support and educational guidance is given to both victims and perpetrators.
• Seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
• Conduct regular bullying audits to monitor prevalence, location, year level, perpetrators and victims
• Develop a series of positive interventions as a way of dealing with bullying within our school community.

Students with Disabilities:
As an educational provider we must make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to accommodate a student with a disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student’s learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those students with the disability, the educational provider, staff and other students.
Whilst at our College the Educational Support Leader /Special Needs Leader will manage the individual learning, social and emotional needs of students’ with disabilities, including:
• Costs resulting from the student’s participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
• Benefits of the student’s participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers.
• Any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

Attendance:
To maximize student learning opportunities and performance it is essential that children attend school regularly, and without unnecessary absences. Students must attend a minimum of 80% of their classes in order to satisfactorily meet the requirements of the year level.
An attendance officer will be employed to assist Year Level Coordinators to oversee student attendance.

School Actions and Consequences
At Maffra Secondary College, student engagement and wellbeing will be supported through the development and implementation of a whole school set of expectations and through positive relationships. These are based on whole school and classroom practices, which incorporates all of the areas outlined above.
• The establishment of a ‘Positive Behaviour Matrix’ which outlines a consistent set of school behavioral expectations.
• Ensure that student participation is integral to the development of classroom and whole school expectations.
• Provide personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students.
• A consistent approach to acknowledging all students
• Empowering students by creating opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making.
Provide physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning.
Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, as outlined in
Appendices:

The following documents support our Engagement & Wellbeing Policy

- Appendix 1 – Student Management – Responsibilities & Processes
- Appendix 2 – Student Management – Responsibilities & Processes – Flow Chart
- Appendix 3 – Student Management – Exit Process
- Appendix 4 – Student Management – Exit Process – Flow Chart
- Appendix 5 – SWPBS-EL – Positive Behaviour Matrix
- Appendix 6 – Restorative Practices Document
- Appendix 7 – Bullying Prevention Policy
- Appendix 8 – Drugs – Prevention & Intervention Policy / document
- Appendix 9 – Canteen Policy
- Appendix 10 – Attendance Policy
- Appendix 11 – Use of Digital Devices Policy
- Appendix 12 – Uniform Policy
- Appendix 13 – Students with Disabilities Policy
- Appendix 14 – Mental Health Policy
- Appendix 15 – Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Ratification:

This policy was ratified on 22nd October, 2013.

This policy will be reviewed as part of our 4 year review cycle, or earlier if deemed necessary.