Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

UPWEY HIGH SCHOOL

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.

Upwey 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.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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POLICY

1. School Profile

We are a medium-sized comprehensive secondary school, located in the Dandenong Ranges, 40 kilometres east of Melbourne. The school is in a magnificent mountain setting amongst the slopes and mountain ash on the edge of the Sherbrooke Forest. There are beautiful views of the surrounding Dandenongs and the site integrates well with the adjoining Upwey-Tecoma Recreational Reserve and facilities.

Established in 1937, our school has a strong sense of community and a history in the provision of education in the Dandenong Ranges. We are a school where successive generations of families have been educated and a school to which they proudly return. Upwey High School provides educational pathways for students in VCE, VET and VCAL programs, ensuring that the needs of all students are met.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school values are: Aspiration, Respect and Kindness. We aim to develop students who will be resilient and responsible, highly motivated lifelong learners. Through the establishment of positive relationships and high expectations, students will be encouraged to reach their full potential.

Upwey High School affirms democratic principles and our school vision through our policies and processes. In all documents, in all practice by students and teachers, in work with the School Council and the community, in all teaching and learning programs, in all school initiatives, in all internal and external interactions, in all organisational structures and practices democratic principles guide our work and the vision of the school sits at the centre.

We expect our work to align with the school vision. Regular evaluation processes will be in place to measure performance in all areas of the school with respect to the implementation of the vision and values of the school.

The process at our school can be represented as the vision and values at the centre of a circle. As a further outer ring will be a set of practices. A detailed list of school policies will sit within this framework.

In all work in the school, the question '*Is this work or process in line with the school vision and values?*' This question will be a fundamental part of the practice of all leaders in the school.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Upwey High School strives to provide a wide range of curriculum offerings and extra curricula activities to better engage students and improve their outcomes. We recognise the need to support the whole student across the five dimensions of health and wellbeing:

- *engagement in learning*
- *social and emotional wellbeing*
- *the provision of supportive relationships*
- *the promotion of physical health*
- *ensuring the safety and material wellbeing of students*

The challenge for Upwey is to provide different strategies and approaches, tailored to individual needs. The development of work-readiness skills is essential and needs to be started at the earliest opportunity. Through the provision of quality learning and teaching, delivered in 21st century facilities, we provide educational pathways for students in academic and vocational areas whilst providing a broad range of co-curricular activities allowing us to ensure the needs of all of our students are catered for.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

<u>Universal</u>

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and families.
- 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 through the delivery of the Respectful Relationships Program and ensuring gender equality is visible across the school
- welcoming all families 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 and VCE, including the Vocational Major to ensure that students are able to select subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Upwey High School use an 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 Upwey High school 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 is incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and families so 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 families
- 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 level meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Team Leaders, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the school production, the Volleyball Program, sporting events, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team, Team Leaders, Significant teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs, safe use of technology and correct use of public transport)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

<u>Targeted</u>

- each year level has a Team Leader and a designated Teaching Team and students in Years 7-9 have a Significant Teacher. These teachers monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their class, 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

- the school assists students to plan their work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understand appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Murrung plan for more information
- Our English as a second language students are supported through individual education plans and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- We support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through our TRIBES processes and significant teacher model
- We provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ student support, including the establishment of the Rainbow Alliance action group
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and be 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

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to Orange Door, Headspace
- referral to Navigator
- Lookout

Upwey 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 families 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 eg: 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 Youth Mental Health Services or 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, 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
- 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.
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers

4. Identifying students in need of support

Upwey High School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment which is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

The Upwey High School Equal Opportunity Policy and Child Safe policies cover our protocols and procedures.

The Student Wellbeing Team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Upwey 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, catch up learning and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

5. 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 and families 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:

- *work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition*
- *participate fully in the school's educational program.*

Students have the responsibility to:

- *participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be 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, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.*
- *As students progress 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.*
- *Students should, with support, be expected to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.*

6. 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 consistent with Upwey High School's Anti Bullying and harassment policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Upwey High School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, families will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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 Team Leader
- restorative practices
- Catch Up learning sessions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Upwey High School values the input of families, 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 families 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 families 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 independent learning tasks 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 the development of individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Upwey 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
- SOCS

COMMUNICATION

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in annual Re induction days
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Made available in hard copy from the General Office 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 and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

REVIEW CYCLE

Policy last reviewed	July 2022
Consultation	Education Committee
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2024