

# STUDENT WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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**Policy Owner:** Assistant Principal  
Wellbeing

**Approver:** Principal

## 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.

Fairhills 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 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 values, philosophy and vision
2. Engagement strategies
3. Identifying students in need of support
4. Student rights and responsibilities
5. Student behavioural expectations
6. Engaging with families
7. Evaluation

## POLICY

### 1. School values, philosophy and vision

Fairhills High School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a

commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

Fairhills High School's vision is 'Inspiring and empowering members of our school community to achieve their full potential in an inclusive and supportive environment'. Our mission is to build a culture of respect for teaching, learning and each other. Fairhills High School's objective is to achieve excellence with our staff and students through our Teaching and Learning Practice which embody our school values and enable our students to achieve their potential and become responsible citizens.

Fairhills High School's values are:

***Showing Respect*** – by providing learning opportunities that encourage cooperation, cohesion and compassion among students and staff we aim to develop kindness, mutual respect and thoughtfulness.

***Acting Responsibly*** – by providing opportunities for students to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour we aim to develop life-long learners.

***Building Relationships*** – by focusing on positive, empathetic interactions and genuine communication we aim to develop supportive relationships that allow students to be engaged in their school and education.

Our complete 'Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy' is available on our website.

## **2. Engagement strategies**

Fairhills High School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. Our focus is to build a structure of learning around the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework developed by the Department. 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 VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations

- teachers at Fairhills High School use our Instructional Teaching 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
- 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 Voice and other forums including year group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.

### Targeted

- each year group has a Year Level Coordinator, a senior 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
- all students will be involved in career education and senior students will develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- wellbeing and health staff will undertake targeted health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year.

### Individual

Fairhills 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 and/or a Behaviour Management & Support Plan
- 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
- 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.

### **3. Identifying students in need of support**

Fairhills 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. Fairhills 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

### **4. 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, 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.

## 5. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Fairhills High School's Bullying Prevention Policy. An overview of responses to bullying is provided below:



### FHS Bullying Response Process

**Bullying** occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately and repeatedly upset, harass, intimidate, threaten or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. It can be direct/indirect/physical/verbal and includes cyberbullying.

**The Year Level Coordinator (YLC) will investigate any potential bullying issue in a timely manner.**

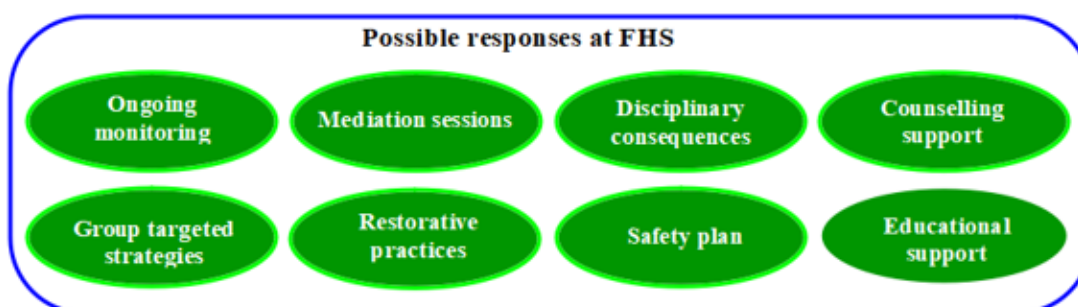
The YLC will speak to 1-3 and 4-5 if necessary:

1. The alleged victim(s). Student(s) complete an incident report
2. Witnesses
3. The alleged perpetrator(s). Student(s) complete an incident response
4. Relevant staff members e.g. Assistant Principal - students
5. Relevant external stakeholders e.g. parents

**If bullying has occurred the following factors need to be considered when determining a response (not an exhaustive list):**

- |                                |                       |  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| ◦ Any element of provocation   | ◦ Impact on victim(s) | ◦ Severity and frequency of the bullying |
| ◦ Age, maturity and year level | ◦ Past behaviours     | ◦ Group or individual bullying           |

#### Possible responses at FHS



**For further information please refer to the Bullying Prevention Policy on the school website**

Documentation to be kept at all stages and transferred to Compass by the YLC

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Fairhills High School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff. Refer to the following Student Behaviour Management Plan for a summary of behaviours and actions that will be taken if these are not met.

# Fairhills High School Student Management Plan

| Infringement level                        | School Values (ABS)  | Responsibility                                    | Actions and Strategies   | Reporting  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>+</b>                                  | <p><b>Not an exhaustive list</b></p> <p><b>Act Responsibly can be demonstrated by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop high expectations</li> <li>○ Lead by example</li> <li>○ Follow school rules</li> </ul> <p><b>Build Relationships can be demonstrated by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Be honest, authentic and inclusive</li> <li>○ Be reliable &amp; trustworthy</li> <li>○ Show integrity</li> </ul> <p><b>Showing Respect can be demonstrated by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Look after yourself, others and the school</i></li> <li>○ <i>Use appropriate tone and language</i></li> <li>○ <i>Develop a safe &amp; caring environment</i></li> </ul> | All staff members                                 | <p><b>Not an exhaustive list</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Verbal praise</li> <li>✓ Compass award</li> <li>✓ Communicate with Year Level Coordinator (YLC)</li> <li>✓ Communication with home</li> <li>✓ Nomination(s) for the Awards night</li> <li>✓ Leadership application</li> <li>✓ Excellent school report</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Compass</b></p> <p>Staff member who recognised the positive behaviour.</p> |
| <b>1</b><br>Low level                     | <p><b>Not an exhaustive list</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Incomplete coursework</li> <li>○ Repeated lateness to class</li> <li>○ Minor class disruptions</li> <li>○ Talking in class without permission</li> <li>○ Uniform</li> <li>○ Use of mobile phones</li> </ul>  | <p>Classroom teacher</p> <p>All staff members</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Classroom expectations negotiated and positive behaviour behaviours discussed</li> <li>○ Implementation of school policies &amp; procedure e.g. Mobile phone, Uniform</li> <li>○ Implementation of classroom agreement, restorative conversations process and management strategies</li> <li>○ Other strategies/actions suggested by the YLC</li> </ul>               | <p><b>Compass</b></p> <p>Classroom Teacher</p> <p>Staff member</p>               |
| <b>2</b><br>Persistent<br>low level<br>or | <p><b>Not an exhaustive list</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Distracting others from learning</li> <li>○ Initial refusal to follow instructions</li> <li>○ Swearing- not towards a person</li> <li>○ Refusal to complete coursework</li> <li>○ Truant</li> </ul>  | <p>Classroom teacher</p> <p>Teacher on duty</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Classroom expectations restated and positive behaviour behaviours revisited</li> <li>○ Implementation of school policies &amp; procedure e.g. Mobile phone, Uniform</li> <li>○ Implementation of classroom agreement and management strategies</li> <li>○ Meeting/discussion with parent/guardian</li> <li>○ Other strategies/actions suggested by the YLC</li> </ul> | <p><b>Compass</b></p> <p>Classroom Teacher<br/>YLC</p>                           |

| medium   |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>3</b><br><br>Persistent<br>medium level<br><br>or<br><br>high level | <b>Not an exhaustive list</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bullying</li> <li>○ Dangerous/violent behaviour</li> <li>○ Destruction of property</li> <li>○ Refusal to follow instructions</li> <li>○ Swearing towards a person</li> </ul> | YLC<br>DSE<br>AP-Students<br>Principal | Implementation of strategies in line with the Department of Education's & FHS policies & procedures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Counselling</li> <li>○ Educational support</li> <li>○ Individual Education Plan</li> <li>○ Suspension (internal &amp; external)</li> </ul> | <b>Compass</b><br>YLC<br>AP-Students<br>Principal<br><br>DSE |



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, including Restorative Conversations (see outline below)
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension/expulsion


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>

## Restorative Conversations

Restorative Justice means that when things go wrong, we need to:

- Involve those responsible for and those affected by the behaviour in solving the problem
- Provide support to all parties
- Give strong messages about what is acceptable and unacceptable.

 **NOTICE** changes in mood and behaviour that might indicate a student is having trouble managing emotional distress.

 **INQUIRE** sensitively and competently about the student's circumstances.

 **PLAN** appropriate first steps

### Restorative dialogue

There are six stages to such a dialogue.

1. **Engagement:** both parties are invited into the dialogue
2. **Reflection:** encourages thoughtfulness and empathy
3. **Understanding** how people have been affected, i.e. that harm was done or hurt caused
4. **Acknowledgement** of the harm or hurt and possible apology
5. **Agreement** on making a plan to fix things
6. **Arranging a follow-up** to make sure the plan is working

## Engaging with families

Fairhills 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, 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.

## 6. Evaluation

Fairhills 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
- Compass data
- SOCS

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For further information refer to related policies:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Bullying Prevention*
- *Child Safe Policy and Standards*

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 12/6/21 and is scheduled for review in June 2023.

## VERSION CONTROL TABLE

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