

 <b>BERWICK COLLEGE POLICY</b>	TITLE	<b>STUDENT WELLBEING &amp; ENGAGEMENT</b>		
	VERSION/YEAR	4/2024		
	PUBLISHED LOCATIONS	COMPASS, STAFF HANDBOOK, WEBSITE, INDUCTION PACK		
	ISSUE DATE	OCTOBER 2024		
	REVIEW DATE	MAY 2026		
	REVIEWED BY	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	APPROVED BY	PRINCIPAL
PURPOSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Berwick College seeks to establish and maintain a high level of professional standards in relation to all activities within the College. This policy is in accord with the College's 'Mission Statement', 'Values' and 'Service Standards'.</li> <li>To ensure that Berwick College complies with its duty of care obligations and responsibility to provide a safe and supportive learning environment that can effectively engage all students</li> <li>To provide policy and procedure direction to all staff, students, parents and volunteers of Berwick College.</li> <li>To ensure that all students and members of our school community understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students</li> <li>our expectations for positive student behaviour</li> <li>support available to students and families</li> <li>our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
BACKGROUND:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our College acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.</li> </ul>			
RELATED DOCUMENTS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reg 23, Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)</li> <li>VRQA Minimum Standards for school registration</li> <li>DE School Policy and Advisory Guide: Student Engagement</li> <li>Berwick College – Philosophy, Vision and Values Policy</li> <li>Berwick College - Duty of Care Policy</li> <li>Berwick College – Child Safety Code of Conduct</li> <li>Berwick College – Bullying Prevention &amp; Response Policy</li> <li>Berwick College – Child Safety Responding &amp; Reporting Obligations</li> <li>Berwick College ICARE Handbook (Behaviour Management Handbook)</li> <li><u>DE Equal Opportunity and Human Rights – Students policy</u></li> </ul>			

#### RATIONALE:

Berwick College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students can 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 College's ICARE values.

#### SCOPE:

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

#### 1. SCHOOL PROFILE:

Berwick College was founded in 1977 with the motto "Crescam – I shall grow" and is located approximately 45 kilometres southeast of Melbourne in a high growth corridor. Berwick College is a school community that values excellence in learning and teaching. Over the past few years, enrolments at Berwick College have increased to 1750

students from years 7 to 12 and 170 staff are employed, including a College Nurse, Wellbeing Coordinator and maintenance staff.

Our College community lives and learns on the lands of the Bunurong people of the Kulin nation, and the activities of the Koorie Education team, staff and students, are supported by our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Berwick College has multi-generational connections to the local community and enjoys support from service organisations such as The Rotary Club of Berwick.

Our College has a focus on recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating different learning styles and rates of learning, and intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs. Our College strives to be a learning community where students and teachers can relate well to each other, and where different ideas and viewpoints are valued and respected.

## **2. COLLEGE VALUES, PHILOSOPHY AND VISION:**

Berwick College's motto is "Crescam". Taken from the Latin verb "crescere", the term crescam means "I will grow" and reflects our commitment that every person "shall grow".

At Berwick College our community fosters resilient, empathetic students who challenge themselves to learn, grow and become contributing members of society. We pride ourselves on providing an inclusive, positive and respectful learning environment.

### Guiding principles of Berwick College's educational philosophy

We view all learning as relational. We focus on building relationships that support life-long learning, linking the key elements of our programs, policies and processes to create settings where students and teachers know each other better.

As students come to the end of their journey at Berwick College, we aim for them to:

- Possess the life skills which enable them to face challenges with confidence, resilience, empathy and respect
- Be adaptable to change and embrace continuous learning through problem solving, creativity and thinking critically
- Have a continuing sense of community, both locally and globally and an awareness of the importance of the environment.

Students are at the centre of our practices and we endeavour to ensure that every student has their learning needs catered for as an individual.

We recognise and celebrate our students representing our school proudly and consistently, living our College ICARE Values: Inquiry – Our Learning, Cooperation – Our Community, Achievement – Our Growth, Resilience – Our Character and Empathy – Our Awareness.

At Berwick College ICARE about being cooperative, empathetic, and resilient to inquire and achieve my best.

Our Vision and ICARE values are available online at: <https://www.berwickcollege.vic.edu.au/vision-and-icare-values/>

## **3. ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING STRATEGIES:**

It is fundamental to acknowledge that each teacher through the implementation of the Instructional Model directly influences student learning outcomes, wellbeing and engagement. Berwick College staff will work collectively to ensure that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the College and can effectively engage with their learning. This College recognises the need to be engaging and inclusive and acknowledges 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 – The College will:

- Focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to achieve success.

- Collaboratively develop and implement fair and respectful, school wide positive behaviour (SWPB) and restorative practice approaches. See Berwick College Student Management Processes and Guidelines: 'The ICARE Handbook'
- Use an Instructional Model that provides teachers with a holistic, consistent and strategic framework for classroom practice and acts as a scaffold for the documentation of High Impact Teaching Strategies, literacy practices and Amplify (Student Voice and Agency).
- Encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children.
- Promote active student voice and participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment through our student leadership program. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, home group teachers, wellbeing team, including the College Nurse, learning support team, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who are experiencing academic and/or behaviour difficulty and require additional assistance and support.
- Provide targeted social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students, and monitor and evaluate progress. Various support programs and parent forums are delivered by the wellbeing team.
- Build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our College and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.
- Analyse and be 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 VCE Vocational Major to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations.
- Monitor, promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:
  - Articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
  - Adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
  - Following up student absences promptly and consistently
  - Implementing data-driven improvement strategies
  - Providing early identification of, monitoring and supportive intervention for students at risk of non-attendance.
- Acknowledge positive behaviour i.e. Upholding the ICARE values and student achievement through the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program and the Reward and Recognition program, in the classroom via Green Chronicles, and formally in year level and whole school assemblies, social media platform, College newsletters, Celebration of Achievement evenings and communication to parents.

### Targeted

- To improve student connectedness, students in years 7 to 12 are placed in horizontal year levels, with two Learning Leaders, an Assistant and a home group teacher responsible for monitoring attendance, health and wellbeing.
- Teachers will prepare a classroom relational learning plan consisting of strategies that build positive relationships, classroom rules and strategies to manage student behaviour.
- Koorie students are supported by our Koorie Education Team to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Reconciliation Action Plan for further information.
- All students in Out of Home Care (OOHC) are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in OOHC, including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan or Behaviour Support Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment. Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma.
- 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 a disability, the school, staff and other students. The College is committed to the delivery of an inclusive curriculum that ensures our students have access to a quality education to meet their diverse needs. To improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities, the following key strategies are in place:

- Providing parents/carers with a learning program and/or Individual Education Plan that best suits their child's needs
- Involving students and parents in programming and planning decisions, including participation in Student Support Groups
- Supporting students' access to programs that let them pursue achievable pathways
- Ensuring the expertise of teachers working in our College is maintained and developed.
- Students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)
- All students participate in a Careers Education Program, including Morrisby Testing and Career Action Plans with targeted goals and support to plan for their future. Year 10 and Vocational Major students participate in Work Experience.

### Individual

Berwick College 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 a 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, SECASA (South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault), Lookout, 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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - with a disability
  - in Out of Home Care
  - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

### **4. IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT:**

Berwick College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The year level structure, Student Wellbeing team and Learning Support Team play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies which help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Berwick 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
- observations and/or referrals entered on Compass (Chronicle) by school staff such as changes in engagement, barriers to learning or concerns with academic performance, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- School Wide Positive Behaviour data and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

Issues such as suicide risk, new self-harm, homelessness, family violence incidents, abuse and mandatory reporting matters must be reported to Wellbeing or a Principal Class Officer as soon as possible.

## **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, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our College's ICARE Values highlight the rights and responsibilities of members of our community. All members have an obligation to ensure the school property and resources are appropriately used and maintained.

It is the right of all members of the Berwick College community to experience a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment. Staff, students and parents/ carers have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and enjoy an environment free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation and will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention and Response Policy. Our College code of conduct is published in the Child Safe Standards – Code of Conduct.

Teachers also have the right to be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student and a responsibility to demonstrate the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching. That is, to know how students learn and how to teach them effectively, know the content they teach, know their students, plan and assess for effective learning, create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments, and use a range of strategies to engage students in effective learning. Teachers also have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and the strategies outlined in 'The ICARE Handbook'.

Students have a responsibility to contribute positively to the educational experience for themselves and other students, to participate fully in the school's educational program, and to ensure that their behaviours demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

Parents/ carers have a responsibility to take an active interest in their child's educational progress, model and reinforce positive behaviours and ensure their child's regular attendance. They have a responsibility to support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, and engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

We recognise and accept the equality of men and women 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, physical features, political beliefs, pregnancy, race, religious beliefs or personal associations.

### THE CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We respect and promote the 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 and 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 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

## **6. STUDENT BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS AND MANAGEMENT:**

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our College's ICARE values, Expected Behaviours, and a restorative approach.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, inappropriate use of electronic devices (including disseminating or allowing to be disseminated photos, audio or video recordings of students, staff, visitors and or the College taken without permission or creating social media and Instagram accounts using these recordings of other students, staff, visitors and or the College without permission), harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy.

Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention and Response Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Berwick College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement and the SWPB Continuum of Response for minor and major behaviours. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as after-school reflections, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

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:

- giving a student a verbal warning that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student within a classroom, confiscation of device or other reasonable and proportionate responses to minor behaviours
- withdrawal of privileges such as internet or printer access, participation in an excursion or camp  
NOTE: Inappropriate accessing of sites and/or the use of applications unapproved by the College may result in a warning and/or monitoring software installed on student devices for a period of time.
- referral to the ~~Student~~ Learning leader or Senior School Leader for major behaviours
- restorative practices
- after school reflection
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion.

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

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, 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. When a student is suspended it will be the shortest time necessary. If the suspension is for five days, a post-suspension student support group meeting may also be scheduled. This is optional, but recommended at Berwick College.

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.

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

The Principal of Berwick College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21. Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

## **7. ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES:**

Berwick 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 and Compass
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
- involving families with the academic progress of their child and other curriculum-related activities
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## **8. EVALUATION:**

Berwick 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, parent and staff surveys
- SWPB data and Compass data analytics
- Academic Assessments
- Case Management

Berwick College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards such as Panorama, to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.