STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our General Office on 03 5036 4900 or email swan.hill.c@education.vic.gov.au

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.

Swan Hill 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, 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.

Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. School profile

Swan Hill College is located 350 kilometres north west of Melbourne on the Murray River and is situated within the CBD of the rural city of Swan Hill. In 2024 750 students are enrolled at the College supported by in excess of 100 teaching and non-teaching staff. There is an equal gender balance and the catchment area includes township primary schools, local private schools and outlying primary schools some of which are 60 kilometres or further from the College. A comprehensive bus system services the College and other schools in the township. Some of our students travel for over 2 hours every day to gain access to the College.

The College has continued to work on facilities development to a point where it now boasts some of the best facilities in the State. A 250 seat theatre, modern technology facilities, outstanding library and extensive sporting arenas including stadium are but a few examples. Swan Hill College continues its focus on information technology with the addition of a technology hub based in our library which includes VR, 3D printers, laser cutters/engravers and green screen.

The College Leadership Team currently comprises of the Principal, three Assistant Principals, the Business Manager and six Leading Teachers with specific portfolios.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is well embedded across the college. At Swan Hill College we work together to achieve excellence and have high expectations of behaviour to create an environment which promotes individual academic and social growth. A clear set of behavioural expectations are developed around the school values of Respect, Responsibility, High Expectations and Belonging.

The College has a Flexible Learning Options (FLO) campus. This program offers flexible learning opportunities for students who are disengaged or challenged by structured learning in Years 8 to 12. The program is very successful and has given many students the chance to continue their education through various VET subjects, SBATs and VPC. At our FLO campus, we have also continued to work on improving our facilities, which include outdoor learning and sustainability areas. The FLO campus also boasts its own gymnasium, indoor pool and commercial size kitchen. The students operate the "FLO Campus Coffee Shop" each week and, as part of their barista studies, sell to the college community and public.

At Swan Hill College, we have a focus on the continued development of our teaching through the implementation of our Professional Learning Community. Our work is guided by the high impact teaching strategies and the inquiry cycle with a current focus on questioning and the high reliability literacy teaching procedures.

Our college enjoys considerable parent and community support in our vibrant rural setting. Student engagement, aspirations and welfare are the key focus for the College and wider community.

The College is an accredited performance and development culture school and professional development will be targeted to address these priorities.

The College's Annual Implementation and Strategic Plans are available on our website www.shc.vic.edu.au

2. School values, philosophy and vision

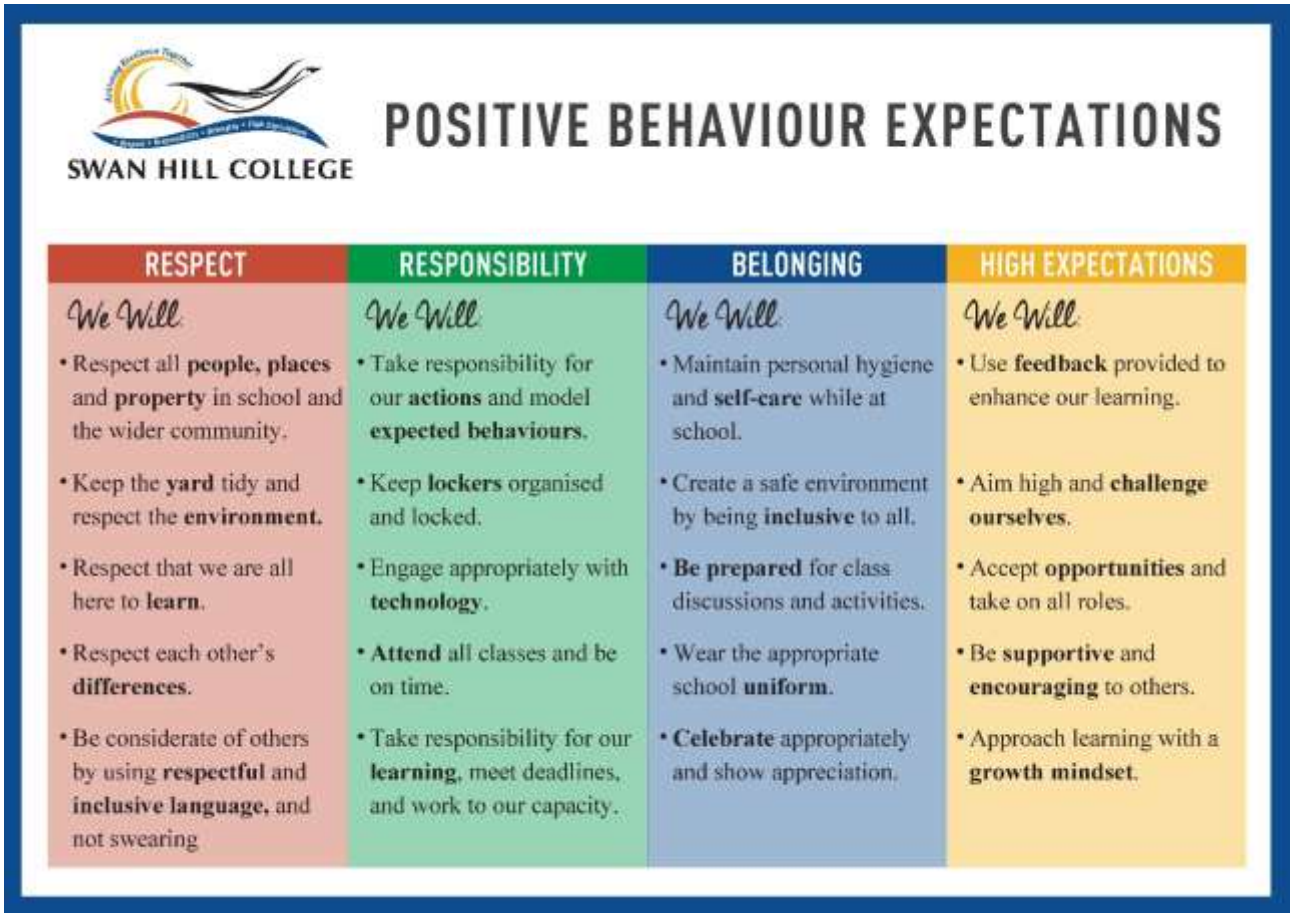
At Swan Hill College we work together to achieve excellence and have high expectations of behaviour to create an environment which promotes individual academic and social growth.

A clear set of behavioural expectations are developed around our key school values of:

RESPECT, HIGH EXPECTATIONS, RESPONSIBILITY, BELONGING

- All behaviour is a result of the choices we make
- All actions have consequences
- Behaviour is managed by developing relationships and rapport
- Positive behaviour is supported, recognised and celebrated

Our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Expectations Matrix outlines our values and specific expectations. The Matrix is clearly displayed across all learning environments.



3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Swan Hill 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 (group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal Strategies:

- As a school we have implemented a school wide Positive Behaviour Support plan. This plan is designed for all students;
    - We explicitly teach our expected behaviours
    - We reward students for displaying these behaviours
    - Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
    - Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Leadership and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Manager, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
    - Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive. We are a 'Safe Schools' and 'Respecting Relationships' College
- 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
- 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, school level assessment data, DIS data
- Deliver a broad range of stimulating curriculum;
    - Including VET programs, VCE and VM to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
    - Teachers at Swan Hill College use a college wide instructional framework as explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
    - Teachers at Swan Hill College 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
    - All students have the opportunity to transition into VCE, VET and VM.
- Wellbeing;
    - Monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
    - Each year group has a Year Level Manager, a teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the wellbeing of students, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
    - All students are welcome to attend Wellbeing for Support. Requests for referrals can come to the Year Level Manager from students or their parent/guardian. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
    - Offer an extensive transition program for students in grade 6 moving into year 7
    - Students have access to a range of wellbeing programs including SEED, SAGA, Great Mates, Embrace and Empower and Hands on Learning.
- Extra Curricula;
    - Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school production, school sports, music programs, Green Team and peer support programs.
    - Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, homework program, recess and lunchtime activities)
    - create opportunities for students to experience a variety of camps and excursions
    - all students will have access to careers support

<u>Targeted</u>

- All Koorie boys will have the opportunity to be connected to our CLONTARF Academy
- All students in Out of Home Care can have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Swan Hill College assists students to engage in work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- Wellbeing and Health and PE 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
- Swan Hill College provides targeted programs for a range of supports, such as The Literacy program, Reading Program, Sunshine Maths, Hands on Learning, and ACEs.
- Swan Hill College offers a Flexible Learning Option
- Swan Hill College offers an EAL program.
- Our PBS handbook also has targeted intervention for students and can be accessed on our website.

Individual

- Student Support Groups, see: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Disability and Inclusion Profiles
- Referral to Wellbeing and Student Support Services
- FLO
- Police Liaison Officer
- Healthcare in Schools
- Referral to Child First, Headspace, Orange Door, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), other agencies
- MDAS
- Navigator
- Lookout
- For other intensive support please refer to our PBS Handbook

Swan Hill 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 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
- Staff training in restorative practice.
- Accessing a sensory room for students
- Referring the student to:
    - School-based wellbeing supports
    - CLONTARF
    - HEADSPACE
    - Student Support Services
    - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, CAMHS 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 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.

For more information, refer to our PBS Handbook, via our website.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Swan Hill College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Wellbeing and Sub School teams play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Swan Hill 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
- Transition records
- Ongoing assessment records in Compass
- Observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- Attendance, behavioural, detention and suspension data
- Communication through outside agencies and community groups
- 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, 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 their Year Level Manager, a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and our PBS Handbook. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Swan Hill College's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Swan Hill College 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.

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 are outlined in our PBS Handbook and include:

- Warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- Teacher early intervention consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and appropriate responses to misbehaviour
- Referral to the Year Level Manager
- Restorative practices
- Detentions
- Behaviour reviews
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Yard restriction
- Tap in / Tap out
- Confiscation
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Exclusion from yard or class

Further information can be found in our PBS Handbook, via our website.

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.

7. Engaging with families

Swan Hill 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. e.g., though Compass, Parent Teacher evenings, information evenings, Newsletters, emails and text messages, phone calls
- 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, Disability and Inclusion Profile meetings and other meetings as appropriate, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Swan Hill 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 Attitudes to School Survey data
- Incident's data
- School reports
- Compass

- VCE and VETRAK Data
- Parent survey
- CASES21
- SOCS

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

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available on the school's website
- Discussed in staff meetings, as required
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2026
Consultation	School Council – 19.10.2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2028 (2-years)