

Cann River P-12 College

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 03 5158 6245 or email cann.river.p12@education.vic.gov.au

OUR 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.

Cann River P-12 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Cann River is situated 450 kilometres from Melbourne in Far East Gippsland, near Croajingolong and Coopracambra National Parks. The town has about 150 residents: the area also includes Noorinbee and Club Terrace.

The Cann River P/12 College has a strong sense of developing students as individuals and providing them with opportunities and pathways. The curriculum is tailored to student's needs: students enjoy a high degree of individual attention. There is a whole-school approach to developing social skills based on the School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports. (SWPBS)

The school has excellent facilities: refurbished library, and three new playgrounds, including fitness stations for secondary students. There is a professional kitchen and a VET Auto workshop. All students in the school have access to a notebook computer. The School has a bus and a car. The school has spacious grounds and is situated in a beautiful rural setting.

The College in 2025 caters for a population of 34 students from Prep to Year 12. Class groupings in 2025 for students are Grade P - 4, Grade 5/6, Year 7/8, Year 9/10 and VCE. The College offers a broad, flexible and inclusive curriculum, including VCE and VET programs. There are opportunities for Year 10 students to undertake VCE and VET units. In 2025, five students are studying at least one of eleven possible VCE subjects. The school population can be relatively transient. Most students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school or catch the bus from the Noorinbee and Club Terrace areas.

There are limited future employment options for students in the immediate area, so transition beyond school is a focus. All students experience a wide range of learning experiences both in and out of the community: excursions include urban excursions, outdoor education camps, interschool sport, careers expos, work experience, year level camps, and VCE studies. Extra school programs include after school activities (with student leaders), breakfast club, community sports, the annual school production, interschool billy-cart competition, successful entry to many art competitions, parent community barbeques, Book week activities, and weekly VCE study nights. 'Jinga', the school community newsletter, is published fortnightly.

A significant focus is professional development with a teamwork-based approach: professional learning teams work to develop and enhance their teaching approaches. This is closely linked to teacher evaluation and is focused on the FISO and Performance and Development Culture.

The school is very well resourced with staff for its size, with a teacher in each specialist area: support staff are used to support student learning at all year levels. We have visiting specialists to support students, such as speech pathologists, student counsellors, and student psychologists.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school aims to be a safe and happy learning community where students are engaged to achieve their personal best in a caring environment of respect and cooperation.

Our Values:

We aim for each child to be:

- Confident, happy and positive
- Considerate and respectful of others, locally and globally
- Skilled and knowledgeable for success in the world

We aim for the school to be:

- Respectful of differences
- Inclusive
- Positive – the acknowledgment of achievement
- Encouraging high expectations
- Nurturing and safe
- Connected to the community

We value:

- Skills and knowledge
- Relationships - respect
- Community

Our Expectations are:

- Respect Self
- Respect Others
- Respect the School Environment

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Cann River P-12 College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. 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:

Strategies

- consistent use of SWPBS strategies across the whole school
- 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 and VCE to ensure that students can choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Cann River P-12 College are engaged in utilising school-wide literacy strategies to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidence-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Cann River P-12 College 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 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
- 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 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 through the Student Representative Council 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.
- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school plays, community sport and Active After School Activities
- All students are welcome to seek help from all staff at Cann River P-12 College. All students are helped if they need additional support through the school counsellor or school psychologist.
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs
- each year group has a Form Group Teacher/Coordinator 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 from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan with targeted goals and help to plan for their future
- the school assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- All students have an Individual Learning Plan. This is frequently updated in staff meetings and wellbeing meetings.
- 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, 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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Targeted

- each year group has a Year Group Leader/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
- Koorie students are supported 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 Aboriginal Action Plan for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, 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 developing an IEP
- 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
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being 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
- 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 from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- Cann River P-12 College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Cann River P-12 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
- 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

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

Cann River P-12 College 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. Cann River P-12 College will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- Every morning during staff briefing, there is a sharing of students' success from the previous day and any concerns about students for the day
- 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

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, racism, 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. 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 school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, 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 Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Cann River P-12 College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. 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 implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, 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:

- 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
- detentions
- 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>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Cann River P-12 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

Cann River P-12 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, 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.
- welcoming parents to parent-teacher interviews and school events such as sports, mother's and Father's Day activities.

8. Evaluation

Cann River P-12 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 survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Cann River P-12 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 publicly on the school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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 reviewed:	September 2025
Consultation:	School council at the September 2025 meeting
Approved by:	Principal
Next review:	September 2027