STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the office on 5336 7804.

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.

Mount Rowan Secondary 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

Mount Rowan Secondary College was established in 2019 after the demerge of Ballarat Secondary College. It is located in the north-west of Ballarat approximately 110 kms north west of Melbourne. Mount Rowan Secondary College is compromised of 680 students enrolled from Years 7 to 12 and 125

teaching and Educational Support staff members, including a school nurse, a wellbeing team, A doctor (as part of the Doctors in School Program) and a Koori coordinator.

Our local community of Creswick, Clunes, Mount Blowhard, Miners Rest, Wendouree, Invermay and Ballarat North is growing each year and is very supportive of the school being the only Government Secondary College in the area. We have very strong ties with our local feeder schools in the area as well as local community groups and welcome opening our school facilities for their use.

Most students who attend our school live locally and many walk and ride to school. We have a significant population of students from local rural areas West and North Ballarat and these students rely on buses to transport them to school.

We are an inclusive and supportive environment and are continuing to grow in both our Indigenous and culturally diverse population. We celebrate difference, inclusion and understanding.

We strive to provide a supportive and challenging learning environment for all students and staff and aim to provide every member of community with the confidence and support to learn and grow to the best of their ability. We recognise that learning is not simply an academic pursuit and we reinforce with our students the importance of their social and emotional wellbeing as well.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

SCHOOL VALUES

We want and expect all students to be **respectful** of each other and staff, as the basis for learning and achieving their full potential. We want all students to show **pride** in themselves, their learning and our school. We want our students to show excellence in their effort to learning, be responsible for their own learning, so they are well informed, contributing citizens of society.

Students at Mount Rowan demonstrate **RESPECT** through the following behaviours.

- Displaying manners and language appropriate to the school setting
- Being a productive participant in learning
- Being supportive of the learning of other students

Students at the Mount Rowan demonstrate their **PRIDE** through the following behaviours.

- Presenting themselves and representing the school in a positive manner
- Participating with energy and enthusiasm in extra curricula and community activities
- Speaking positively about their school and their achievements

Students at the Mount Rowan demonstrate their valuing of **EXCELLENCE THROUGH EFFORT** through the following behaviours.

- Aiming for personal best standard
- A commitment to consistent and persistent effort
- Actively seeking strategies for improving

Teachers at Mount Rowan demonstrate **RESPECT** through the following behaviours.

- Teachers show respect by being consistently fully prepared for classes
- Modelling positive and respectful behaviours at school and in the community
- Adhering to and implementing our agreed strategies

Teachers at Mount Rowan demonstrate their **PRIDE** through the following behaviours.

- Presenting themselves and representing the school in a professional manner
- Participating with energy and enthusiasm in teaching and co-curricular activities
- Speaking positively about their school and the achievements of students

Teachers at Mount Rowan demonstrate their valuing of **EXCELLENCE THROUGH EFFORT** through the following behaviours.

- Aiming for personal best standard
- A commitment to recognising and celebrating consistent and persistent effort and high achievement
- Actively seeking strategies for improving student growth and attainment

Parents and Carers at Mount Rowan demonstrate **RESPECT** through the following behaviours.

- Treating staff with respect
- Ensuring their children have correct equipment for learning
- Ensuring that their children adhere to all of the schools policies

Parents and Carers at Mount Rowan demonstrate their **PRIDE** through the following behaviours.

- Talk positively about Wendouree Campus
- Being Proactive in their child's learning
- Participating actively in school community activities and events

Parents at Mount Rowan demonstrate their valuing of **EXCELLENCE THROUGH EFFORT** through the following behaviours.

- Speaking highly of the school and student outcomes
- Encouraging and supporting participation in all school activities
- Supporting 100% attendance
- Reinforcing Learning Behaviours at home

VALUES

Mount Rowan Secondary College's vision is "Together we grow and achieve"

MISSION

Mount Rowan Secondary College's mission is to ensure that every student reaches their learning potential by providing students with a holistic education. We ensure that their academic, social and emotional development is catered for. At Mount Rowan Secondary College we pride ourselves on knowing every individual student in our community, thus ensuring their learning needs are met.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Mount Rowan Secondary 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.

We recognise in order to best support our students we must understand the range of needs they have everyday within our school. We focus on our learners in the holistic sense and aim to support them academically as well as socially and emotionally during the 6 years they are with us.

A summary of the whole school, targeted and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal:

- School Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPB)
    - Promoting, prioritising and rewarding positive behaviour across the school and in all different settings.
    - positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- High and consistent expectations of all community members – that is students, staff, and families.
- Creating a culture that is safe and inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued.
- Creating partnerships with families and parents to support the ongoing learning of all students in the school.
- Teachers at Mount Rowan Secondary College use the Marzano Art and Science of Teaching to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidence-based, high impact teaching strategies are incorporated into all lessons.
- Develop an educational program for all students that incorporates a range of subjects and programs to ensure that students receive an holistic education.
- At a senior level deliver a broad curriculum including, VCE, VCE VM and VET programs to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailed to their interests, strengths and aspirations.
- Carefully planned transition programs to support students moving to different stages in their schooling.
- Monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school performances, athletics and other sporting programs and music programs.
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Respectful Relationships
    - Safe Schools
- 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 Level Coordinator and a Leading 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 and parents 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 [insert name of any other school documentation you have in place outlining the school strategies to support Koorie students] 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 EAL support.
- 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 and via the Mount Rowan SC Pride Group.
- 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 Students 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, student support groups, individual education plans as well as being part of the DIP process as required.
- 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 trauma informed principles in their practice, fostering an environment of safety, trust and understanding for students who have experienced trauma.
- A range of programs are offered at MRSC by external professional programs, through different year levels, focusing on a point of need such as cyberbullying and the the effects of social media and sexual health and consent.
- 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
- The Mount Rowan SC careers team support students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

INDIVIDUAL:

Mount Rowan Secondary 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

- Re-engagement programs such as Navigator or the engagement officer

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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- 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.
- Student Support Groups, see: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
  https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/oohcedplans.aspx
  https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/teachplans.aspx
- Program for Students with Disabilities
  https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/needs/Pages/default.aspx
- Navigator
  https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/navigator.aspx
- Lookout
  https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/lookout.aspx

4. Identifying students in need of support

Mount Rowan Secondary College is dedicated to supporting the social, emotional and academic development of all of our students.

The Wellbeing Team plays a critical role in identifying students in need of support and developing and implementing plans to address this and enhance their wellbeing. Mount Rowan Secondary 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 from Compass.
- academic performance as identified by teachers throughout the year.
- 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 to YLCs or Youth Counsellors
- referrals from Parents/Guardians for wellbeing support

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.

Guiding Principles

- Members of the Mount Rowan community are committed to creating a positive, cooperative and supportive school environment that emphasises positive relationships.
- All students are valued and will be treated with respect.
- Students will work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, harassment, bullying or disruption they are able to fully develop their interests, abilities and talents.
- Teachers have the right to expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment.
- Mount Rowan expects students to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Student Rights:

Learning	To learn without interference from others.
Communication	To communicate ideas and views without interference from others.
Treatment	To be treated with respect and in a fair and equitable manner free from harassment.
Environment	To work and learn in a well-resourced, clean and pleasant environment.
Safety	To be, and feel safe.

Student Responsibilities:

Learning	To attend class on time, prepared to learn and not interfere with the learning of others.
Communication	To speak and listen in a manner that shows respect for others.
Treatment	To treat others with respect and resolve differences through discussion and compromise, not conflict.
Environment	To use and care for our environment and the property of others.
Safety	To act in a safe manner showing consideration for members of the Mount Rowan community. Safety includes not having dangerous items and substances in your possession.

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, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

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. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Mount Rowan Secondary College's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mount Rowan Secondary 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 reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, 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

The Principal of Mount Rowan Secondary 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

Mount Rowan Secondary 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 all families are welcomed into our school community prior to their child's enrolment in Year 7 through a variety of Transition events aimed at strengthening our Mount Rowan community.
- Ensuring that all parents and guardians have access to our school policies, procedures, structural and curriculum information on our College website.
- Ensuring that all parents and guardians have access to accurate and up to date information about their child and school events as well as positive feedback about their child in line with the SWPB program through our online portal Compass.
- Involving families in learning discussions with their child through formal and scheduled sessions such as Parent Teacher Student Conversations.
- Including parents and guardians in Student Support Groups and developing individual learning and behavioural plans for students.
- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families and individual students.
- Having regular events at school which celebrate learning such as the Science Fair, Art Show and musical performances to ensure that parents can partner with us in their child's learning.

8. Evaluation

Mount Rowan Secondary 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 on Compass
- attendance data on Compass
- SWPB data – positive behaviour nominations on Compass
- school reports
- parent survey
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Mount Rowan Secondary 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 our school's website and via Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration 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

For further information on related policies please see:

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 Safe Code of conduct Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy 2022

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2025
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2027