



Student Engagement policy

Associated policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures
- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Attendance Policy
- Child Safe Policy

1. School Context

Lyndhurst Secondary College (Years 7-12) is situated just north of Cranbourne in the south-western corner of the City of Casey – one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia. Our College presently has an enrolment of around 700 students. Over recent years, the cultural mix of the College has changed dramatically with 36 per cent of our students now having a Language Background Other Than English. The Student Family Occupation index has progressively increased over each of the past six years to its current levels of 0.6667.

The Lyndhurst Secondary College community is committed to providing a safe, challenging and stimulating learning environment which champions individual differences, excellence and integrity in order to develop open-minded citizens capable of contributing confidently and responsibly to an ever-changing world. **Our Vision** – Empowering students for learning and life – is supported by a **clear set of values** – Excellence, Commitment, Integrity and Respect – all of which are underpinned by an overarching belief in high expectations for all.

With regard to facilities, the College has a large, double-court Gymnasium, a well-resourced Drama Theatre, a large Library, as well as significant facilities in specialist areas: Music, Food Technology, the Visual Arts, a state of the art Automotive workshop with the latest technology and equipment, separate Wood and Metal technology rooms, as well as extensive Science based classrooms. The College also has a dedicated English Literacy Centre as well as a Senior School area set aside for VCE and VCAL classes. The College also supports access to technology via a BYOD program. In 2018, a dedicated digital technologies room was created supporting out students in becoming 20th century learners.

The College has a clear focus on maintaining an orderly environment. We recognise that positive student behaviours are most effectively supported through relationship-based, whole-school and classroom practices. Lyndhurst Secondary College has firmly embedded a practice of 'Routine and Respect', as an approach to the maintenance and consistency of order. Our award winning 'Multipride' program celebrates cultural diversity and also promotes harmony within the school. In addition to this we have a highly effective Wellbeing Team.

Presently, the major focus for staff is to develop classroom pedagogy through a range of evidence-based teaching and learning strategies, in an effort to further improve outcomes for students. In addition, teachers meet regularly and work collaboratively in smaller Professional Learning Teams. These teams collect and analyse student assessment data in order to inform teaching practice. The objective is to teach to each student's point of need, regardless of where they are on the learning continuum.

To meet the individual needs of our students we offer a range of flexible learning options and support programs. We also have a wide range of co-curricula programs. As a smaller school, we believe in getting to know our students well and we use these programs as just one of the ways to engage and learn more about the young people with whom we work. We understand the importance of 'student voice' in relation to school connectedness. As a result, there are extensive leadership opportunities available to students across a range of areas within the College community.

2. Rights and Responsibilities

Every member of the College community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity and has the right to feel safe at our school.

The legal obligations for these rights are clearly legally outlined in the following relevant legislation:

- The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected attributes (characteristics) including; race, religion, disability, sex, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, impairment and physical features.
- The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic), which requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services. Charter decisions in schools include decisions around enrolment, attendance, responding to behaviour concerns (including preventing the escalation of behaviours), the making of adjustments for students with disabilities, preventing and responding to bullying, use of restrictive practices including restraint, and decisions to suspend or expel a student. Rights protected by the Charter include the protection of families and children (including promoting the best interests of the child), the right to equality, and cultural and religious rights.
- The Disability Standards for Education 2005, which clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.
- The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017, which clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, which states that all Victorians, irrespective of the education and training institution they attend, where they live or their social or economic status, should have access to a high quality education that— (i) realises their learning potential and maximises their education and training achievement; (ii) promotes enthusiasm for lifelong learning; (iii) allows parents to take an active part in their child's education and training.
- The Child Safe Standards 2016, which further clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, with regard to the ways in which they must work to prevent and respond to child abuse.

More specifically within the College community, our rights and responsibilities are summarised below.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students:

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in a secure environment where they can fully develop their talents, interests and ambition without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment • Participate fully in the College's educational program • Expect a learning program that meets their individual needs. 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate fully in the College's educational program • Demonstrate respect for the rights of others • Take responsibility for their own learning and be active participants of the College community • Protect the rights of every member of our community by striving to uphold their responsibilities.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers:

Rights	Responsibilities
Parents/carers have a right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged • Expect communication and participation in their child’s learning. 	Parents/carers have a responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive educational outcomes for their children • Ensure their child’s regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with College staff regarding their child’s learning • Support the College in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students • Protect the rights of every member of our community by striving to uphold their responsibilities.

Rights and Responsibilities of Staff

Rights	Responsibilities
Staff have a right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • Be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student • Expect to work in a cooperative and collaborative environment. 	Staff have a responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build positive relationships with students as the basis for engagement and learning • Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the Student Engagement Policy • Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments • Protect the rights of every member of our community by striving to uphold their responsibilities.

3. Shared expectations

Lyndhurst Secondary College has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

Our community shares expectations based on the Australian Government’s nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

- **Care and Compassion** – Care for self and others
- **Integrity** – Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- **Doing Your Best** – Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
- **Respect** – Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person’s point of view
- **Fair Go** – Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- **Responsibility** – Be accountable for one’s own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
- **Freedom** – Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

- **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion** – Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others
- **Honesty and Trustworthiness** – Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

Shared expectations of staff include:

- Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage all students in effective learning.
- Hold a belief that all students can learn and progress, given the right opportunities.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to provide the best possible opportunities for learning growth.
- Liaise with parents/carers and other stakeholders to support young people as needed.
- Proactively seek opportunities for improving teaching and learning.
- Engage in inclusive teaching practices.
- Act in accordance with the College values and the Nine Values for Australian Schools, outlined above.

Shared expectations of parents/carers include:

- Support the College's efforts to maintain a positive learning environment, where all feel safe and respected.
- Communicate with the College any relevant information regarding the child, including the explanation of absence, in a timely manner.
- Provide access to the required learning materials and uniform.
- Act in accordance with the College values and the Nine Values for Australian Schools, outlined above.

Shared expectations of students include:

- Bring required equipment to classes, ready to learn.
- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for all members of the school community, including themselves.
- Complete set tasks to the best of their ability.
- Cooperate with the instructions of staff.
- Act in accordance with the College values and the Nine Values for Australian Schools, outlined above.

4. Prevention and Engagement Strategies

The College employs a vast range of both College-wide and targeted strategies to promote belonging and positive engagement. The fundamental core of this work is centred on the creation and maintenance of positive working relationships between all members of the College community.

Student Voice / Student inclusion:

Student voice is highly valued at Lyndhurst Secondary College and the College has appointed a Student Voice Leader to provide students the opportunity to have input into the experiences they have whilst at school. Students are invited to participate in student focus groups/forums, join the Student Representative Council (SRC) or take up leadership positions (including on College Council) as ways to have a say in the running of their school.

In addition to this, students can participate in, and help run, various lunchtime activities and clubs. A wide range of co-curricula activities are also on offer, including academic, sporting and performing arts opportunities.

Safe Schools:

The College recognises the need for inclusivity for LGBTIQ members of our College community, including both students and their family members and staff. As such, the College is a registered Safe School and supports the right for all members of the College community, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, to feel safe and included.

Attendance:

The College understands that full attendance is a key factor to engagement and maximises every student's ability to learn and our teacher's ability to teach effectively. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. Students who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on fundamental aspects of their educational and social development. Please refer to the College Attendance Policy for details of procedures to support maximum attendance.

Point of need learning:

The College has a clear commitment to ensuring all students have access to learning growth, no matter where their point of need lies. Staff work collaboratively to assess and examine student learning data, using this to plan curriculum that is individualised to each young person. These teaching and learning teams meet regularly to reflect on the student growth demonstrated and make changes in the curriculum as appropriate.

At Years 7 and 8, Mathematics lessons are delivered through the Student Numeracy Individualised Program (SNIP) where students are assessed at the beginning of each topic and grouped according to their prior knowledge/ability level. Instruction is then targeted to the areas identified by the teaching team and personalised to each student. Post testing allows teachers to examine patterns in growth and celebrate student success. In contrast, during English lessons at these levels, teachers assess students' reading comprehension skills periodically and use this data to target explicit instruction at the student's individual level.

Transition processes:

The College has developed extensive partnerships with local feeder primary schools and begins assisting students with the transition process from Year 5, where students visit the Lyndhurst campus to participate in a secondary schooling experience. This is continued throughout Years 5 and 6, with further visits, mentoring from College Student Leaders and curriculum links to ensure a smooth transition to secondary schooling.

College staff meet with primary school staff to exchange academic and social information for students, facilitating an effective start in Year 7. This information is used in setting up class lists and in the planning of a learning program for each student.

Students are presented with the Welcome Program in the first week of Year 7, whereby they are supported in getting to know the College, the staff and their peers, along with receiving skill development in making and retaining friendships.

Senior students are supported in their transitions through a series of course counselling and career/pathways programs designed to assist them in choosing the structure of their course (electives and VCE/VCAL) and determining their future pathways.

Wellbeing Support and Intervention:

The College has an extensive array of supports available to students, both in terms of prevention and intervention as required.

There are six members of the Wellbeing Team on staff, comprising two Wellbeing staff, an Adolescent Health Nurse, School Chaplain, Mental Health Practitioner and a School psychologist who work together to provide a comprehensive support structure to students. Students participate in preventative programs to tackle issues such as stress and resilience, building and maintaining friendships and conflict resolution, amongst others. Students identified as at risk receive a planned support response that is unique to their situation. The response may involve external services as deemed appropriate on a case by case basis.

Bullying and Harassment:

The College does not accept or condone any forms of bullying and/or harassment and has a clear Bullying and Harassment Policy which should be read in conjunction with this document.

Restorative Justice Approach:

Positive working relationships are facilitated by utilising a Restorative Justice approach to repair damaged relationships between individuals and groups. A Restorative Justice approach aims to rebuild, repair and reaffirm relationships by focusing on helping students understand the impact of their behaviour on others. It also promotes reflection, responsibility and skills to repair and maintain respectful relationships.

When things go wrong	When someone has been hurt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened? • What were you thinking at the time? • What have you thought about since? • Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way? • What do you think you need to do to make things right? • How can I help you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you think when you realised what had happened? • What impact has this incident had on you and others? • What has been the hardest thing for you? • What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

This approach will be conducted in an informal way for minor incidents and be embedded in classroom teaching and learning. Serious incidents will require a more formal restorative session that will involve Team Leaders, Sub School Leaders and or a Principal member, and all relevant persons affected by the incident.

There will be situations where a formal conference involving the before mentioned people, parents, support persons and convener will be required. Any consequences will be embedded in the restorative process that requires a response “that makes things right” in relation to those who have been affected.

Where a restorative approach has been previously conducted and subsequently the behaviour continues, the school will constitute a Student Support Group to devise and implement strategies and approaches to address the behaviour; this may include intervention from specialist services and external agencies in the local community.

Restorative practices seek to value and support those involved so that they feel empowered to take positive action to address the situation and move forward. Restorative practice is about being respectful of every member of our school community, encouraging responsible behaviour and actions and ensuring that personal pride and dignity is maintained.

It is important to note that restorative practices are designed to complement, rather than replace, any punitive consequences deemed necessary as part of an incident response.

Respectful relationships:

The College is committed to supporting all students in developing respectful relationships throughout their lives and has adopted a holistic approach to this within the school. All students in years 7 -12 take part in respectful relationships curriculum.

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS):

The College recognises the positive impact of an approach that promotes and support positive behaviours in the classroom and the yard. We have been using the SWPBS framework for a number of years, it is an evidence based framework that seeks to prevent and respond to negative behaviour.

5. Child Safe Commitments

Lyndhurst Secondary College is committed to child safety. The College wants children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we always follow.

The College is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. We have human resources and recruitment practices in place for all staff and volunteers. We are further committed to regular training and education for our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

6. Behavioural Expectations and Consequences

The behaviour of students at the College is required to be in line with the College values and students are expected to conform to the responsibilities and shared expectations outlined in Sections 2 and 3 above.

Positive behaviours are supported through a wide range of engagement strategies, and are recognised in a variety of ways. These include:

- Commendation awards
- Celebration assemblies
- Reports
- Newsletter/Media articles
- Leadership opportunities
- Awards ceremonies
- Chronicle entries

Inappropriate behaviours are responded to using a staged response, as outlined in the Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures.

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at this College under any circumstances.

Evaluation Process

Last reviewed: June 2021

Next review: June 2022