

ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Melba College.
Phone 03 9955 5700.

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1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Every school is required to have a 'Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy' that articulates the expectations and aspirations of the school community in relation to student engagement, including strategies to address child safety, bullying, school attendance and behaviour. This Engagement and Wellbeing Policy provides all members of the Melba College community with an understanding of their responsibilities in providing a productive, safe and respectful learning environment. This policy also ensures that all our students are safe in all school environments and outside of school hours as outlined in Ministerial Order No. 1359 and reflected in Department of Education and Training Policies and Guidelines (DET).

This policy will reflect Melba College and wider community values, as well as the college vision. This is achieved with regular input from school leaders, staff, students, parents, guardians and the school council. This approach promotes shared expectations and an inclusive and respectful school culture. The review of the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy will happen in conjunction with the school's annual self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.

The policy also supports the college in addressing our legal obligations under relevant legislation including:

- *The Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic)
- The Disabilities Standards for Education 2005, which clarify and make more explicit our obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *The Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic)

Melba College staff will actively implement the Engagement Policy (Code of Practice) to maximize student engagement and learning outcomes.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Melba 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 helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

To enable Melba College students to reach their full potential, the objective of the Wellbeing Policy is to guide our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values and student needs.

2. SCHOOL PROFILE

Melba College is a school located approximately 30 kilometres east of Melbourne. The college has a total student population of approximately 700 students. We offer a comprehensive, challenging and engaging curriculum and co-curricula program. We also offer a very broad range of experiences covering sport, music, performance, community involvement, cultural, social and leadership opportunities. Our college is very committed to a strong and authentic student voice whereby students are actively involved in the decision making processes in the school.

Our campus environment allows us to provide a 'school within a school' model whereby students are part of a smaller physical environment and yet obtain all the benefits of a larger school in terms of subject choices and co-curricula programs as they move through their years of schooling.

The teaching and support staff at the college are committed to supporting all students in their learning. They undertake ongoing professional development to ensure they are able to provide the best possible learning environment for every student.

To improve student learning at our school we seek to provide more individual attention and support for students. We have additional literacy and numeracy programs to complement our existing curriculum focus in these areas.

College data supports a continued focus on student wellbeing and on improving Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for students.

3. VALUES, PHILOSOPHY AND VISION

Melba College strives to develop young people so they can become fulfilled, positive members and leaders of our society. By recognising and celebrating diversity, high aspirations and positive relations, we create a harmonious school that has a positive sense of purpose and a commitment to each and every person.

Our professional teaching and support staff deliver a comprehensive, engaging and enriching curriculum that prepares our students to graduate world-ready. Melba students benefit from the school's commitment to fostering success in all its forms, providing a positive, nurturing culture, a broad co-curricular program and strong community focus.

The core objective of Melba College is to get the best from and for our students.

Melba College's values are 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, and 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

The Melba College values are **S.T.R.I.V.E.**

- **Success**
- **Teamwork**
- **Resilience**
- **Integrity**
- **Valuing Excellence**
- **Engagement**

Our school values of **S.T.R.I.V.E.** encompass our pathways based approach to education and are centred around the pillars of Teaching and Learning and Student Engagement and Wellbeing.

Melba College provides a comprehensive, innovative secondary education for students in the Croydon community. We prepare our students with the knowledge, skills and values for life-long learning in a rapidly changing and communication technology rich world. The College is committed to provide quality programs and pathways so that all students achieve 'personal best'.

The vision for the school is to provide the highest quality educational opportunities for all students and so allow all students to realise their potential. Students will be exposed to the broadest possible range of learning options and career pathways within a culture of high expectations and the celebration of achievement and excellence.

The foundational principles for the school influence and guide all areas of the school's curriculum. These are that:

- every student has the capacity to learn and progress
- the school has a 'whole' person focus ensuring the emotional, physical, academic and social needs of all students are identified, addressed and supported
- the school has a "Student at the Centre" pathways focus ensuring all decisions are based on the improvement of opportunities and outcomes for students
- recognition of the importance of parents, guardians and the broader community in supporting the learning and wellbeing of students

We take great pride in all our students working hard at school and place a value on excellence. We also understand that success for students takes many forms and work with students and families to get great outcomes for our students. Our VCE median study score is steadily rising in the past several years, on track to achieve a median study score of 30. The college places equal emphasis on achieving outstanding VM and VET results and have committed significant resources to the program over the last 2 years. We are a College that meets the pathway needs of all of our students. The foundations for these results are found in our commitment to successful pathways for our students and relentless focus on improving student outcomes. Student Attitudes to School reflect a strong sense of connectedness

to school, particularly in the Senior School across Years 11 and 12 and an improving connectedness across Years 7-10. Our parent opinion survey meets state benchmarks, reflective of the college's focus on strengthening its connections to the community and achieve a happy and harmonious College community.

The Melba College logo, a soaring raven, evokes the notion of perpetual movement upward and forward and is indigenous in our local community. It symbolises our commitment to facilitating the constant progress of all students toward their every growing potential.

The earthy colour palette chosen to characterise Melba, with its tones of eucalyptus green, terracotta and charcoal reflects our local native environment.

4. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Melba 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.

Melba College will provide a stimulating, positive and caring environment within the framework of a well-defined student code of conduct based on the highest expectations of student behaviour and achievement. Teaching will be innovative and based on the development of high quality teacher – student relationships. Learning will be supported by an extensive and integrated student Wellbeing and Engagement framework. Educational programs for students will work to cultivate respect, understanding and tolerance of others.

A key goal of the school is to equip students for their lives beyond school in further study, training and employment. The school will endeavour to inculcate a love for learning and curiosity for inquiry. The curriculum will have a strong focus on Personalised Learning reinforcing that every student is an individual and has their own skills, strengths and learning needs.

Through curriculum, pedagogy and school wide programs Melba College will also promote the values of:

- Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion
- Care and Compassion
- Freedom of Thought and Speech
- Honesty and Trustworthiness
- Responsibility
- Doing your Best
- A Fair Go for All
- Dignity for All

The curriculum is based on a core and elective model with increased choice available to students as they progress through the college. VCE, VM and VET are offered and equally respected pathways at Melba College. Partnerships with well-established external agencies exist in relation to VET studies and a significant proportion of students undertake VM.

At Melba College we focus on:

- Successful pathways for students
- inclusive teaching practices
- accessible educational provision for all students
- parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- provision of appropriate student services
- development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

At Melba College we always:

- have 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
- create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcome all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analyse and respond 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 VCE, VM and VET programs, to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- use an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- provide pathway options for students from Year 7, through to Year 12.
- 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
- incorporate our college's Statement of Values into our curriculum and promote to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully plan transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- promote positive behaviour and celebrate student achievement
- acknowledge success 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
- encourage students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups
- encourage students 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, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- welcome student self-referral to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind
- are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
 - Positive Education
- conduct programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- provide opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- provide and develop buddy programs, peers support programs

At Melba College targeted engagement strategies include:

- year level groups that have a Year Group Leader and Sub-school Coordinator responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in that year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- development of a Career Action Plan for all students from Year 8 and above, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- connecting all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer

- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- work experience opportunities for all students in Year 10, supported by their Career Action Plan
- wellbeing and health staff undertaking health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff applying a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Support Plans
- Programs for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace and other Mental health Support Agencies
- NEV Region DET Programs referral
- Lookout Program referral
- Referral to a one of the school engagement programs which include Helping Hands, Activate, Construct, Learning Hub, Make a Change, RESP and Life Skills. These programs are regularly evolving to respond to student needs.

Melba College also 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 Education 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 provided by the DET

Where necessary Melba College 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
- Visiting a student home address where families are non-responsible
- Referring families to Region DET support
- 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.

5. IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

Melba 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.

Melba 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
- 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
- Tracking documents such as Supporting Students at Risk (SSAR) for students with under 50% attendance

To further improve student interest and engagement in school and build student learning confidence and belief in themselves Melba College will:

- implement a positive behaviour program across the school using a program based on positive psychology developed and implemented e.g. school wide positive behaviour program, you can do it, bounce back etc.
- train staff in understanding and implementation in a thorough manner of a positive behaviour program
- raise the level of student leadership and voice
- provide effective and relevant leadership opportunities developed to capture the responsibility and confidence of students in each of the two learning communities
- provide more responsibility for year 7 and 10 students
- increase the level of student voice raised in areas such as policy, curriculum, student management, school daily organisation including lunchtimes activities, uniform and assemblies
- ensure clear and consistent student management practices by all staff relevant to each learning community
- implement a college wide Student Wellbeing Framework
- implement a consistent pedagogy across the college
- implement consistent teaching and learning expectations across the college
- implement a rigorous, sequential and engaging curriculum across all learning areas.

6. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Guiding principles

Every member of the school 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. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Melba College's Philosophy, Values and Vision highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Student Rights and Responsibilities are enshrined in law.

Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

Under the act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following:

- age
- breastfeeding
- gender identity
- impairment
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity

- marital status
- parental status or status as carer
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex or sexual orientation
- personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter 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.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief Cultural Rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DET employees and Melba College staff must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promotion of human rights

Students with Disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

Melba College will make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. Any adjustment will be reasonable and take into account the student's learning needs and balance the interests of all parties affected; including those of the student with the disability, Melba College staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, Melba College will take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously and:
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, parents, carers or friends of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

Melba College will ensure that the student, and parents or carers of the student, have timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship.

Melba College will also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

Melba College may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

Diversity in the College Community

Melba College will promote and celebrate diversity within their school community.

The school aims to address diversity by:

- maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
- attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

Key Rights and Responsibilities for Melba College Students

At Melba College all students therefore 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.

At Melba College all 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.
- participate in Student Voice student leadership

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.

Principles concerning the rights and responsibilities of students, parents and teachers

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES	STRATEGIES
<p>Safety and Wellbeing All individuals have a right to work in a safe, secure, clean and healthy school environment, without intimidation or danger, to fully develop their talents, interests and ambitions and carry out their duties.</p>	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be polite, co-operative, honest, tolerant and non-discriminatory in dealing with all members of the school community. • exercise self-discipline to resolve all conflict in a non-aggressive manner. • comply with staff directions and area-specific expectations to ensure safety and wellbeing. • care for others physically and verbally and behave in a socially acceptable manner 	<p>Promote positive behaviours in all facets of College life Teach positive behaviours, conflict resolution, communication and social skills Use Restorative Justice processes Provide: Effective teaching and learning environments, engaging curriculum, student services and facilities support programs and transition programs Health promoting school Communicate clear expectations in all facets of school life</p> <p>Mentoring Model appropriate behaviour</p>
	<p>Parents have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the implementation of the Student Engagement Policy • model appropriate behaviour • ensure their child’s regular attendance • support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students 	
	<p>Staff have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote a positive and cooperative school environment • fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Student Engagement Policy • model appropriate behaviour • know their students • create and maintain a safe and challenging learning environment 	

<p>Respect All individuals have a right to be valued and treated with respect. Care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are expected.</p>	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop positive relationships with peers and staff and accept others' differences. • protect and care for school property , your own and other people's property • treat the College environment with care. • uphold the good image of the school at all times. • follow any reasonable and clearly communicated instructions given by College staff. • take responsibility for their behaviour. 	<p>Promote building better relationships through whole school by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of school values – tolerance, respect, excellence, responsibility and integrity • Promotion and teaching of positive behaviour expectations • Use of Restorative Justice processes • Understanding of the value of own and others property and belongings • Students, parents and teachers modelling appropriate behaviour • Leadership and pro-social skills building opportunities for students • Mentoring • Provision of engaging curriculum and extracurricular activities • Course counselling • Staff professional development • Interim and Semester reports • Provision of effective learning environments • Flexible and inclusive learning programs • Recognition of students productive efforts • Leadership opportunities
<p>Parents have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain close communication with the college and support school programs and policies • model appropriate behaviour 		
<p>Staff have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model respect, fair treatment and problem solving behaviours • Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy 		
<p>Excellence in teaching and learning All individuals have a right to learn and teach in an orderly and co-operative environment, which maximizes the opportunity of all to strive for excellence. Pride in personal and academic achievement is encouraged.</p>	<p>All individuals have a responsibility to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.</p> <p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend regularly, punctually and be equipped for all activities. • actively cooperate, listen effectively, persist and strive to do their best. 	
<p>Parents have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the implementation of the Student Code of Conduct especially with regard to attendance and uniform • promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours 		

Staff have a responsibility to:

- communicate clear expectations and develop classroom strategies consistent with the Student Engagement Policy
- acknowledge and encourage positive student behaviours
- know how students learn and how to teach them effectively
- Know the content they teach
- Plan and assess for effective learning
- use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning

7. STUDENT BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

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

Shared expectations

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole-school community. Shared expectations at Melba College are:

- jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students
- clear and specific
- focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
- focused on prevention and early intervention
- supported by relevant procedures
- consistent, fair and reasonable
- linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

Honesty and Trustworthiness

Melba College expects all staff, students and community members to be honest, sincere and to seek the truth. Melba College expectations include:

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

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

School actions and consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when require.

When developing actions and consequences, Melba College will ensure that they are developed in consultation with and agreed on by representatives from the whole-school community, including students. This will foster a cohesive and consistent response to poor attendance and inappropriate behaviour. These actions and consequences should be incremental (a staged response) and should be applied fairly and consistently.

Applying fair and consistent discipline and attendance policies that are collectively agreed on and fairly enforced increases the likelihood that student connection to school is maintained.

Equal emphasis will be placed on issuing positive consequences for meeting high expectations as there is on negative consequences.

Actions and consequences should have an educational role and aim to foster positive relationships and retain the dignity of the student. Actions and consequences that isolate a student from learning should be avoided where possible.

Melba College actions and consequences will be framed in a positive way to encourage students to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience. It is important that at Melba College exclusions are only considered when all other options have been exhausted or where the wellbeing or safety of another student is at risk.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- consistently acknowledging all students
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- understanding the student's background and needs
- ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- scaffolding the student's learning program.

Broader support strategies will include:

- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- involving the student wellbeing coordinator, managed individual pathways or careers coordinators ☐ tutoring/peer tutoring
- mentoring and/or counselling
- convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, work education, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving community support agencies.

Restorative Practices

Melba College is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim. Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, section 4.3 of the DET guidelines published in **Effective Schools are** schools are required to follow the procedures listed in **Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines**.

A student may only be excluded from school only in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Student acts of violence against other students or staff will, however, result in suspension or expulsion. Melba College has zero tolerance to any acts of violence.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.
- Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.
- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.
- Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.
- The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.
- Convening of a support group (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Melba 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. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Melba College Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy.

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 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>

Melba College does not permit corporal punishment under any circumstances as specified in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 s. 4.3.1(6) Requirements for Registration*

8. ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES

Melba 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.

9. EVALUATION

Melba 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.

Whole-school diagnostic strategies

The Attitudes to School Survey shows students' responses in relation to eleven dimensions. Student Motivation, Student Safety and Learning Confidence are three of those dimensions.

- Student Motivation measures the extent to which students are motivated to achieve and learn.
- Student Safety measures the extent to which students feel safe at school
- Learning Confidence measures the extent to which students have a positive perception of their ability as a student.

Examination of the Attitudes to School Survey shows significant variation between the results of students in different year levels across these three measures.

Addressing the unevenness in the results on the Attitudes to School Survey is the intended outcomes of the strategies listed below.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

RELATED MELBA COLLEGE POLICIES

- Melba College Philosophy and Values & Implementation
- Melba College Bullying Prevention Policy
- Melba College Curriculum Framework Policy and Guidelines
- Melba College Annual Implementation Plan
- Melba College Duty of Care Policy
- Melba College Annual Report

REFERENCES

- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement](#)
- [Policy Guidelines](#)
- [School Accountability and Improvement Framework](#)
- [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools](#)
- [Disability Standards for Education](#)
- [Charter of Human Rights](#)
- [Safe Schools](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#)
- [VIT Teacher Code of Conduct](#)
- [Ministerial Order No. 1359](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	January 2024
Person Responsible for Policy Development	Assistant Principal - Wellbeing
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	January 2027