



North Geelong Secondary College

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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) the support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour

North Geelong 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 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. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

TERMINOLOGY

- *compass* refers to the student management and school operations software package used by North Geelong Secondary College
- Navigator and Lookout are DET intervention support initiatives
- ChildFirst and Headspace are organisations that provide families and students with social and emotional support

POLICY

1. School profile

North Geelong Secondary College (NGSC) is a single campus, academic Year 7–12 College located in the northern suburbs of Geelong and was established in 1966. It is a creative, caring and diverse College, where young people grow into autonomous learners by engaging in our imaginative and intellectually rigorous programs. Our students develop into mature and independent individuals, fully prepared for a life of meaningful achievement and active participation in our local and global community.

The school values "Respect, Excellence, Achievement and Diversity" (READ) are the bedrock of all school activities and are continuously promoted in the wider school community. The majority of the student enrolment is drawn from the northern and western suburbs of Geelong. The school provides for a culturally diverse community with 31% of families having a language background other than English and 4% of the students represent the Koorie Community.

NGSC provides an English as Additional Language (EAL) program (withdrawal EAL program) from Year 7 to Year 12, which includes MEA (Multicultural Education Aides) program for ongoing classroom support to EAL and refugee background students in the mainstream classes. The College is supported by the Geelong English Language Centre (GELC) for new arrivals to access English tuition.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

The NGSC Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, excellence, achievement and diversity at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to become resilient, responsible, global citizens who can positively contribute to society.

Our Statement of Values is available online at: <https://ngsc.vic.edu.au/downloads>

3. Engagement strategies

North Geelong Secondary College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

- 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
- 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, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at North Geelong Secondary College use the Visible Learning (Hattie) 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
- teachers at North Geelong Secondary College adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Values (READ) are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents including the use of *compass* acknowledgements
- 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 on decisions about school operations 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, athletics, music programs , SRC, Human Powered Vehicle team, lunchtime activities
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Group Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bullying prevention programs
 - Cyber safety programs
 - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. building friendships, managing anger)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

Targeted

- Year Level Coordinators (YLC) manage a year level monitoring the health and wellbeing of students in their year and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support; Assistant YLCs are included in each team to support Years 7-11; Sub school Leaders oversee two year levels (i.e. Junior, Middle and Senior sub school)
- 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
- Koorie students are connected with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer

- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor/Designated teacher, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- North Geelong Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- 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

Individual

- Student Support Group meetings, (see: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>)
- Individual Learning Plan and/or Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Navigator (DET)
- Lookout (DET)

North Geelong 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

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:

- with a disability
- in Out of Home Care
- and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring

4. Identifying students in need of support

North Geelong Secondary 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 to help identified students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing.

North Geelong 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
- 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, 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Wide Positive Behaviours. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with North Geelong Secondary College's Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, North Geelong Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied 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

Development of Self-Responsibility – Restorative Practices:

Students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions, and to participate fully and positively in their educational experience. The Restorative Practices approach is implemented as a way of building effective working relationships between teachers and students and providing a framework supporting expectations that teachers can teach and students can learn without interference.

If a student is disrupting the learning of other students or preventing the teacher from teaching the teacher will follow the behaviour modification strategy of the Four Rs:

1. REMINDER - The student is given a non-verbal/contact warning
2. REDIRECTION - The student is reminded of the Classroom rules
3. REPOSITION - The student is moved to another seat, if needed or if space is available
4. RELOCATION - The student is placed in another classroom for the remainder of the lesson, completes the *Think Sheet* and continues with their classwork.

The follow-up restorative conversation with the classroom teacher occurs at a time designated by the teacher with the aim of identifying the behaviour, the impact on others and the actions required to remedy the concern.

Teachers will enter the incident on *compass* and contact parents/carers as appropriate.

The Sub-School Leaders or an Assistant Principal will become involved if the student refuses/runs off from relocation or if a suitable alternative class cannot be found.

The procedure is a guideline and the response will depend on the nature of the situation in regard to severity, safety and repetition of similar behaviour. In the event of swearing at the teacher or more serious misbehaviour the teacher may go to straight to RELOCATION. If a student refuses to follow the teacher's instruction to move or if the teacher requires assistance in responding to aggressive behaviour, the teacher will send a 'red card' to the Assistant Principal or Administrative Office for immediate assistance.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

North Geelong 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 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 Statement of Values and School Philosophy 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
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8. Evaluation

North Geelong 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 - *compass*
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- Student Support Services data

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related policies including *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*, *Bullying Prevention*, *Child Safe Standards* can be viewed on the school website, <https://ngsc.vic.edu.au/downloads/>

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 7 October 2020 and is scheduled for review in October/2022.