

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Fitzroy High School on 03 9488 1900 or Fitzroy.HS@education.vic.gov.au.

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, secure, stimulating and equitable 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.

Fitzroy High School is committed to providing a safe, secure, equitable and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Fitzroy High School is a vibrant, progressive, medium-sized government secondary school, located in the inner city suburb of Fitzroy North. The school delivers a year 7-12 curriculum to around 600 students.

Fitzroy High School first opened in 1915, and was closed in 1992. Fitzroy High School was one of the first of many

schools to be closed across the state during this time.

The local community activated and campaigned for Fitzroy High School on two levels. To stop the site from being sold, volunteers occupied the site and slept in the school every night for over two years. Community members successfully lobbied the government to re-open the school, which occurred in 2004, with 135 students in Years 7 and 8. It then expanded to Years 9 and 10. VCE classes for Year 11 began in 2007 and Year 12 began in 2008, in partnership with Collingwood College.

The school was given a mandate by the Department of Education: to be innovative in our approach to education, and to ensure our students leave the school with the skills required to successfully navigate their futures.

The 2018-19 State Budget allocated funds to plan for a new senior secondary campus to be shared by Fitzroy High School and Collingwood College on the Fitzroy Gasworks site. Both Fitzroy High School and Collingwood College continue to operate at their current locations in addition to the newly established Wurun Senior campus.

Fitzroy High School and Collingwood College have been working together to deliver a wide choice of senior secondary programs while maintaining a strong identity and attachment to each of the respective schools by students and teachers.

Wurun Senior campus offers a key opportunity for well-integrated senior secondary education provision in the City of Yarra. The community is culturally rich and growing fast.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Fitzroy High School's approach to promoting student wellbeing and engagement is guided by our school vision, philosophy and values.

Values

At Fitzroy High School our values of *Trust*, *Engage* and *Respect* guide our approach to student wellbeing and engagement.

Vision

Fitzroy High School values children as individual learners who are full of potential and capable of excellence. Our students will be lifelong learners, reflective and creative thinkers, responsible and active citizens, and resilient and adaptable problem solvers, able to navigate through an uncertain and constantly changing future. Fitzroy is a learning community where students and teams of teachers work together to:

- Achieve high standards so that all students fulfil their capabilities in academic, intellectual, social, emotional and physical development
- Celebrate diversity and embrace individual differences, including class, culture, race, gender, sexuality and ethnicity
- Build a cohesive, compassionate and proud school community with a productive legacy for the future
- Develop beyond our current capacity through continuous change and review
- Participate in and contribute to our wider community.

Philosophy

Fitzroy High embraces a bold and ambitious future: striving for excellence and equity. We aim to be a humane learning community in which teachers use relationships to deepen their knowledge of students. This process aims to engage students in an intellectually challenging education based on powerful ideas, help them toward social maturity, and prepare them for a life of meaningful possibilities and active participation as Australian and global citizens.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Fitzroy High School has developed a range of strategies to promote wellbeing and engagement, an inclusive, equitable 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. At the centre of everything we do are relationships; between students and their peers and between students and teachers.

Fitzroy High School uses a tiered approach to supporting wellbeing and engagement. We use various approaches to support all students as part of tier one. We use more directed and targeted approaches to support students in tiers two and three. We recognise that if we provide the right supports well in tier one, we may end up with less students in need of tier two or three support.

Tier One- for all students

Fitzroy High School uses various whole of school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion, including:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing and engagement
- creating a culture that is inclusive, equitable, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- 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
- delivering of a broad curriculum including Explore in Years 7 & 8, Extend in Years 9 & 10 and VCE, Vocational Major (VM), Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) and Vocational Education Training programs (VET) in Years 11 & 12, to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Fitzroy High School use the Department of Education and Training (DET) Pedagogical Model, High Impact Teaching Strategies and the Gradual Release of Responsibility 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 Fitzroy High School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Vision, Values and School Philosophy is 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, including 6-7 and 10-11 to the Wurun Senior Campus.

- additional transition support for new Year 7 students
- teaching students respectful and positive behaviour through the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program from years 7-10.
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitoring student attendance and implementation of attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students having the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Team and Wurun Student Representative Council and other forums including year level meetings, topic specific workshops and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- creating opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, assemblies, athletics, swimming, music programs and peer support programs
- students are welcome to self-refer to the Wellbeing Leader, 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
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
 - Berry Street Education Model
 - High Impact Engagement Strategies (HIES)
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion (eg clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peer support programs
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Tier two- for some students

Fitzroy High School employs specific strategies, designed to address particular groups of students or concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles, as well as some individual concerns, including:

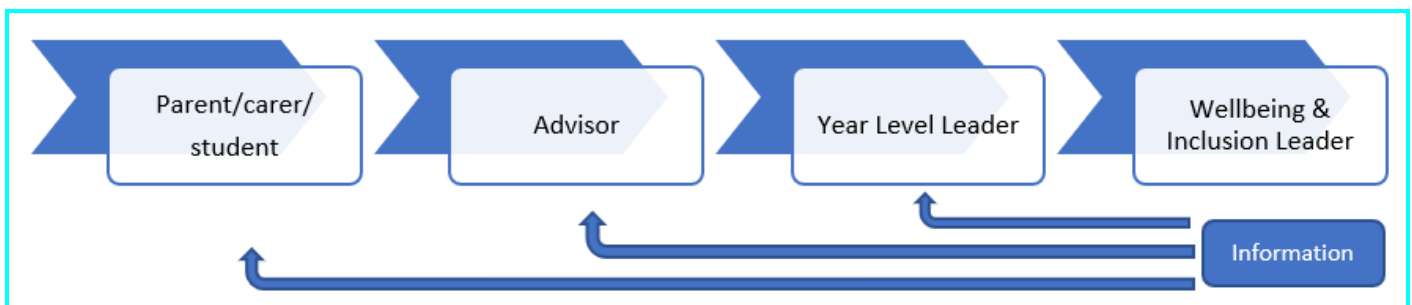
- each year level has a Year Level Leader, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- First Nations students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- 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](#). Our school runs a PRIDE club and we celebrate and raise awareness around LGBTIQ+ issues school wide annually.
- 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 Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department’s policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

- students enrolled under the Department’s international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)
- all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- Fitzroy High School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Tier three- for a few students

Fitzroy High School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement.

Every student has an Advisor or Step Up Mentor who is best placed to monitor needs, and Teachers and Education Support staff work regularly with students. Each year level has a Leader who consults regularly with the Wellbeing Leader for Support, either internally or externally. Parents/guardians are regularly consulted and informed about specific wellbeing needs, and information regarding referrals flows back to the Advisor.



Other strategies 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 with clear classroom adjustments
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Daily values card to support students in making good choices
- 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, Operation Newstart or Brunswick Learning Space

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 Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability

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

4. Identifying students in need of support

Fitzroy High School 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 identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Fitzroy High School 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, equitable 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 Vision, Values and School Philosophy highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Vision, Values and School Philosophy and are taught to students through the *School Wide Positive Behaviour Support* program.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as sexism, racism, harassment and other forms of discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Fitzroy High School 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 implements 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 Leader
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- referral to the Assistant Principal or the Principal
- suspension
- expulsion

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

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

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

The Principal of Fitzroy High School 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

Fitzroy High School 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.
- 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.

8. Evaluation

Fitzroy High School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

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

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Fitzroy High School 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
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- 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

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Vision, Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
	FHS School Council on May 15, 2023 Student Representative Team June 9, 2023 Ongoing consultation available via website
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before December 2024