



STUDENT WELLBEING and ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Cohuna Secondary College on 03 5456 2555 or cohuna.sc@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 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.

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

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

Scope

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

Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
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Policy:

School profile

Cohuna is a small rural community situated on the Murray Valley Highway in Northern Victoria. Cohuna Secondary College, is a co-educational college that services the rural town of Cohuna and adjacent communities. In 2024, our enrolment is 175 students. The College's SFOE is 0.43. We offer an extensive program in the senior school with many VCE units and VET options as well as offering School-Based Apprenticeships as pathway options. We also offered the VM and tuition through Virtual School Victoria and the Victorian Virtual Learning Network to support the broad range of programs offered in the senior school. Continuing success in formal studies, in sport and extra-curricular activities exemplifies the college's emphasis on quality-of-life education. Cohuna Secondary College is committed to meeting the educational, social and cultural needs of the students through promoting a caring, supportive and educationally challenging environment. We provide students with the opportunity to maximise their potential through providing a broad range of cultural activities and setting high academic standards.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

School values, philosophy and vision

MISSION: Cohuna Secondary College's mission is to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education.

OBJECTIVE: Cohuna Secondary College's objective is to ensure all students leave our school well prepared for life beyond the school gates.

Our priority is to provide a safe, happy and engaging environment with high expectations for all. We work to build strong relationships with students, staff, parents and the wider community. As such, our CORE values reflect our objectives.

Cohuna Secondary College **CORE** values are: Community, Ownership, Respect and Excellence.

Community: We look out for each other and support each other, not only within our school community but the greater community in which we live. We achieve great things by working together. We treat others with care and compassion.

Ownership: We accept responsibility for our actions and our behaviour. We strive to achieve our best both individually and as a collective. We act as positive role models for others. We are honest and courteous at all times.

Respect: We respect each other and our environment. Respect involves taking responsibility for both ourselves and others. Respect is speaking to and interacting with others in a courteous manner. It is about being honest, reliable and trustworthy.

Excellence: We value the process of striving for excellence and the desire to produce ones best at all times.

Excellamus-Let us Excel!

Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Cohuna Secondary College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and the support of peers 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.



Universal

Parent/teacher interviews, Reports, School Values, Acknowledgment of Country, *Student Leadership*: Student Voice Committee, Special events: ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, hosting Exchange students, Information Nights, Assemblies...
Teaching and Learning: Maths/Science Competitions, Science Week activities, Public Speaking, Assemblies,
Wellbeing: Resilience program in partnership with The Resilience Project, Arts Performances, Social Worker, staff eating lunch outside everyday, Art Therapist, Cybersafety, House Sports,

- 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 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
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VM, SBATs to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Cohuna Secondary College use LEARN (Learn, Explicit Teaching, Application, Review and Now what?) 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 Cohuna 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/the Victorian Curriculum
- 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
- 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 Voice Committee and other forums including Resilience classes, and form group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, support staff, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the student voice group, athletics, swimming and sports program, activities at lunchtime with the Art Therapist or staff who organise opportunities for students to come together to work on either individual or shared activities, for example 'biker builders'.
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Art Therapist, Social Worker, 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
 - Resilience-GEM (The Resilience Project)
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. Man Cave & Flourish Girl, Courage to Care, Cybersafety and so on)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, library open at lunchtimes every day, and lunchtime activities)
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Targeted

Student Leadership: School Captains, House Captains, Lions Club Youth of the Year, Rural Junior Ambassador program, Future Leaders, Student membership of school and community committees.

Volunteering and Community Service: Cohuna Show, Combined Primary School Cluster Sports, Footy Clinics, the Village, Men's Health Program, Waiting on tables at community events, ANZAC Day service, Remembrance Day Wreath laying,

Wellbeing: Indigenous mural with Koorie student input, Keys Please and Look After Your Mates, Resilience Project-GEM, Wellbeing performances/activities, Year 7 'Get to know you' camp, Bogong Ski Camp, Year 11 Melbourne Orientation, Transition activities, Information Nights, Social Worker, Psychologist (DET), Art Therapist, Cybersafe with the Police Youth Liaison Officer, Respectful Relationships, End of Year activities, lunchtime activities, Courage To Care, Pat Cronin Foundation, Police Youth Liaison Officer visits

Excursions/Incursions: VCE Top Arts/VCE Art Gallery excursions, VCE

Physics/Chemistry/Biology field trips. CSIRO activities. Bogong Outdoor Education camp. Year

- each year group has a Year Level Coordinator, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- we will support learning and wellbeing outcomes of all students but will put programs in place if we have students from refugee backgrounds, EAL an all cultural and linguistically diverse students to feel safe and included in our school.
- 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](#)
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a 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
- 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](#)
- Students in Year 9 begin their career planning with the Morrisby Profiling
- 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
- Cohuna Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan

Individual

Wellbeing: Social Worker, Art Therapist, Psychologist, CAMHS, Doctor, Youth Connections, Private Counsellor, Alternative Educational Programs, SBATs, VET, Career planning-Morrisby interviews, Behaviour Plans, Individual Education Plans, Student Support Group Meetings, Headspace, Navigator Program, DET SSS program, LOOKOUT program, Restorative Practice,

Cohuna 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 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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - Koorie
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Identifying students in need of support

Cohuna Secondary College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team (Wellbeing Coordinator, Social Worker and Art Therapist and staff) plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Cohuna 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

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:

- learn
- 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:

- attend regularly
- 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; and
- take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

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.

Student behavioural expectations and management

CSC STAGE RELATED BEHAVIOUR (see Appendix 'A')

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's CORE Values (Community, Ownership, Responsibility and Excellence).

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. 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, Cohuna Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class. Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- 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.

The Principal of Cohuna Secondary College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

Engaging with families

Cohuna 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.
- 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.

Evaluation

Cohuna 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
- parent survey
- XUNO, including attendance and absence data

Cohuna Secondary College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included as a staff meeting agenda item annually
- Copy emailed to all students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

Further information and resources

The following Department of Education 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 and Wellbeing Policy
- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)



Policy REVIEW and Approval

Policy last reviewed	March 1 st 2024
Consultation	Staff: 12/03/2024 emailed 18/03/2024 staff meeting School website: 14/03/2024 School Council emailed: 13/3/2023 School Council meeting 19 th March Students: 12/3/2024-22/3/2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before March 2026

Summary of protocol for dealing with Student Management

BEHAVIOUR DESCRIPTOR

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

WHO MANAGES?

