

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

Keilor Downs 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.

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### **POLICY**

#### **1. School profile**

Keilor Downs College is a single campus secondary school situated on the north-western edge of suburban Melbourne. The college has about 155 equivalent full time staff, consisting of 4 Principal Class, 103 teachers and 48 Education Support staff. It has approx. 1260 students, with high levels of non-English speaking backgrounds (60%) and is categorized as low medium socio-economic status, with an SFO around 0.55. The school opened in 1984 and has reasonable facilities, spread out over 8 hectares of grounds. We receive a very high number of Year 7 enrolment requests but try to limit our intake to 225 each year. This will stabilize our enrolment around the 1250 mark for the next few years.

The college has a strong, traditional Learning Area structure but puts enormous amounts of time and resources into continually improving classroom practice. We have worked with an external consultant for over five years and have an established instructional practice model,

a well-documented standards-based curriculum, an agreed differentiation approach and offer extremely high levels of professional learning.

KDC's achievement data is good - above like schools and state means on almost every measure. The College has a strong record of achievement in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) with high completion rates and an 'all studies' median figure consistently in the 29 - 30 range. The numbers of students achieving ATAR scores over 80 are very strong and the percentage of study scores above 40 has been at or above the state average of 6% for several years. Similarly, the percentage of students accessing tertiary education is extremely high, with over 85% of graduating students successfully achieving tertiary places. The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is delivered at both the Intermediate and Senior level and our students access a wide choice of Vocational Education & Training (VET) programs through our local cluster.

An obvious strength of the college is its strong student support structures. Student engagement and management is based on four vertically grouped Houses. House management teams consist of a House Leader, student coordinators, Home Group teachers and an attendance assistant. Students stay within the same House for their six years at KDC, making them very well-known and connected to the school. We have a large, proactive wellbeing team and provide a strong social curriculum in Years 7 - 9. KDC is a Respectful Relationships lead school and is also involved in the Doctors in Schools program. We were also an original pilot school for the School-wide Positive Behaviour Support Program (SWPBS). These programs and processes have resulted in a very calm, positive learning environment.

Student Leadership is a strong element of the college, with an extremely active student leadership group, Year 12 Leadership group, Student Voice group, sport leaders, program ambassadors and a strong and successful Peer Leader program.

The college has an extensive Program for Students with Disabilities, supported by strong inclusive programs and approaches. We are also a long-time provider of a gifted education program, being one of the original Select Entry Accelerated Learning program (SEAL) schools and a member of the Academy of SEAL Schools. We run an International Students Program (ISP) with around 35 - 40 students, predominantly coming from Vietnam and China. A sister school program has existed for over 25 years, with Shiroy district schools in Japan, with a bi-annual reciprocal visiting program.

KDC has an extremely strong sports program, including an elite soccer academy program. We also have a very strong music program and are very active in inter-school competitions in debating and chess.

We have a very collegiate, professional teaching staff who balance great experience and technical expertise with a continual willingness to improve their practice. We have a strong distributed leadership structure, with clear portfolios across the Principal Team and a strong group of Leading Teachers and Learning Specialists, as well as an extensive range of responsibility positions.

## **2. School values, philosophy and vision**

Keilor Downs College's 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, inclusion, growth, resilience and community at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

### **3. Engagement strategies**

Keilor Downs 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 Keilor Downs College use a GANAG 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 Keilor Downs 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 Statement of Values 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 House, Year Level and school assemblies and in 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 our student leadership groups and other forums including year group or small group meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their subject teachers, Homegroup teachers, House Co-ordinators, 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
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, their House, 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 where we are a Lead School
  - Social Education as a part of the curriculum in Years 7 - 9
  - Safe Schools
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Buddy programs, peers support programs

### Targeted

- Each Homegroup has a Homegroup teacher and is attached to a House where co-ordinators and the House Leader monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their House, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- All students from Year 9 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Keilor Downs 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

Keilor Downs 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
  - on-site doctor as a part of the Doctors in Schools Program
  - on-site psychologists
  - on-site speech therapist
  - use of 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 Child First
  - re-engagement programs

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**

Keilor Downs 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 that help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Keilor Downs 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 such as their Homegroup teacher, their House or a member of the school leadership team.

## **6. Student behavioural expectations**

The College supports the approaches promoted by School Wide Positive Behaviour Support and has developed three College-wide rules and a 'matrix' of expected, positive behaviours. The three agreements are:

**Positive learning:** working to your full potential and allowing others to work to theirs

**Positive treatment:** understanding the rights of all

**Positive practices:** use of sensible behaviour inside and outside the classroom

Our College student management systems are based on Positive Behaviour Support beliefs, which include:

- Most students behave positively when supported by effective school and classroom systems
- Positive behaviour is teachable and behaviour errors can be remediated by explicit teaching
- Positive and pro-social behaviours should be encouraged and acknowledged
- Small numbers of students will need more intensive and individualized approaches to support their behaviour
- Student management should be focused on prevention and early intervention and needs to be underpinned by effective academic support and remediation programs
- Discipline approaches should be based on consistent, firm, fair and reasonable corrective actions and consequences.

When students engage in behaviour that does not meet the expectations of the KDC 3, Keilor Downs 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 House members.

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:

- Moving the seating of a student within the classroom
- Removal of student to buddy classroom (pre-arranged with teacher)
- Removal to House
- After class restorative conversation
- Lunchtime detention
- Phone call home
- Afterschool detention
- Referral to House (Compass Posts)

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>

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

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

## **7. Engaging with families**

Keilor Downs 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 and Compass (LMS)
- 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
- inviting families to attend information evenings
- encouraging families to play an active role in transition stages including primary to secondary transition, and junior to senior school transitions
- inviting parents to school events such as music and drama performances, student presentation evenings and awards nights.

## **8. Evaluation**

Keilor Downs 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
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- Compass attendance data

## **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](#)


This policy can be read in conjunction with:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Bullying Prevention Policy*
- *Child Safe Policy*

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in **February 2023** and is scheduled for review in **February 2026**.

This policy is made available to the school community via Compass and school website for consultation before going to school council for approval.

<b>Policy last reviewed</b>	February 2023
<b>Approved by</b>	
<b>Next scheduled review date</b>	February 2026