



ELTHAM HIGH SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT

Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office at 03 9430 5111.

INTRODUCTION

Eltham High School prides itself on being a safe and welcoming school for everyone – regardless of gender, identity, cultural background or family circumstances. We believe everyone has the right to a great education. Eltham High School is committed to providing a strong foundation for students' learning through a whole-school approach to student engagement and wellbeing.

Student engagement, wellbeing, welfare and discipline issues are the collective responsibility of all members of the school community. This is an environment where we aim to work together to ensure that the school is a harmonious and worthwhile place to be and where individual's rights are respected and students are supported and encouraged to strive for excellence. Our rights can only be enjoyed when they are protected by the responsibility of the whole school community. It is everyone's responsibility to take part in this process and to ensure that these high standards are able to be met and are able to be expressed in a range of forms: this includes the promotion of shared expectations that clearly embody the school values, which ensure rights are being protected and reasonable expectations of behaviour in the school community are being demonstrated.

PHILOSOPHY

The Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy is underpinned by the school's Purpose Statement: *At Eltham High School each person feels safe to be themselves; and each person is challenged to think critically, to work in teams, to show leadership, and achieve success along many pathways.* This philosophy embodies a long tradition at the school of an inclusive environment and the value that the school places on individuality. The development of self-discipline and social responsibility are the primary aims of the policy. It is based on the following principles:

- Individuals will be valued and respected; they will be treated with courtesy and without discrimination.
- The school will be a supportive, safe and stimulating learning environment.
- School decision-making processes will be collaborative and will foster co-operation.
- The rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community will be made clear and will be honoured.

POLICY STATEMENT

Taking the above into consideration, the general welfare of the students will be considered a whole-school concern. When supporting the students' wellbeing and engagement, the school will endeavour to provide this whole-school approach by taking into account the individual needs of students when planning curriculum and in the implementation of that curriculum. The school will actively promote students' physical and mental wellbeing by providing an environment that is safe, non-threatening and free from discrimination. The school will sustain the

wellbeing of students through the provision of a Student Services Team, as well as three well-resourced Sub-school Coordination teams which will provide support for the pastoral and academic care and access to extra and co-curricular opportunities of all students.

In line with Department of Education guidelines Eltham High School prohibits corporal punishment.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY (Refer to Appendix 1)

- The Assistant Principal (Empowering Students and Building School Pride) will coordinate the whole-school approach to student engagement and wellbeing; and will be responsible for the coordination, the development and review of the Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy, the Rights and Responsibilities Codes for Staff, parents and students, the Student Code of Conduct and the Child Safe Standards.
- The Principal, Assistant Principal, Sub-school Team Leaders and Level Coordinators will implement the policy and the shared expectations in a fair and equitable way. The responsibility for discretion lies with the Principal who will consult as appropriate.
- Sub-school Team Leaders and Level Coordinators will ensure that students are cared for in the sub-school and welfare structure, which will be delivered to support each students' sense of belonging and the confidence to be themselves.
- The Student Services Team will provide: support for the welfare of individual students; programs as deemed appropriate; and the coordination of the resources and services from the community for students, families and the school.
- Staff will encourage students to accept responsibility for their wellbeing, actions and learning. Staff will support students to do this by providing a curriculum which engages students and by acting with care and compassion when working with students.
- The school will provide clear processes to enable school-related and individual student wellbeing issues to be resolved constructively and with the appropriate support from a formed partnership of all parties concerned: parents, students and staff.
- Staff will refer concerns regarding students to Sub-Schools and, where appropriate, students will be referred on to other relevant people or organisations.
- Discipline procedures of suspension and expulsion will be implemented within DET guidelines. The school will endeavour to resolve issues prior to engaging in this process.
- Issues of a sensitive nature will be managed by the Principal of the school. School Council supports the Principal to manage sensitive issues.

BASIS OF DISCRETION

The School Council has responsibility for the establishment, evaluation and review of school policies. The Principal undertakes the responsibility to ensure that school policies are implemented effectively.

Minor changes to the policy (changes that will not affect the spirit of the policy) may be made at the discretion of the Principal.

The Policy Review and Evaluation process will recommend any major changes to the policy to School Council.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Policies:

Safe Connections Policy

Bullying Prevention Policy

Attendance Policy

Child Safety Policy

Gender Affirmation policy

Documents:

Child Safe Standards (PROTECT)

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/protecting-children/policy>

Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-engagement/policy>

School Attendance Guidelines

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy>

REVIEW

This policy should be reviewed every 3 years.

Date Endorsed: 17/05/23

Executive Officer

Eltham High School Council

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND WORKING PARTY INFORMATION:

This policy was reviewed by: Darren Squires

Consultation has taken place with the relevant group(s) in the following list:

Group	Consultation
	✓
School Operations Committee	
Staff	
Students (randomly selected group)	
Parents (randomly selected group)	
Members of the Community	
Other (where relevant please specify)	
Planning and Policy Review Team of Council (Mandatory)	✓
School Council (Mandatory)	✓

