



Bendigo Senior Secondary College

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION POLICY

This policy reflects the DET Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance and was produced in consultation with the college community

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1. College profile

Bendigo Senior Secondary College (BSSC) is a Year 11 and 12 school located in one of Victoria's strongest and fastest growing regional areas. With over 1800 students, we are the largest provider of the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) in the state.

Our ROLE at BSSC is to empower learners for individual, community and global leadership, underpinned by the values of Respect, Optimism, Learning and Environment. We are proud of the significant role we play supporting young people from the Greater Bendigo community to access high quality education programs, tailored to meet the individual needs and pathway goals of every student.

BSSC is located within the Rosalind Park precinct in the centre of Bendigo and has enjoyed an unrivalled picturesque location on this site for more than a century. The entire college site is on the Victorian Heritage Register. Staff, students and the broader community value the history of the college and the contribution it has made to the city and to state education.

The college provides an inclusive learning environment which supports students to develop the attributes and behaviours to be respectful community members, more independent and resourceful learners and to achieve success within and beyond school. We foster a strong study culture with high expectations around student effective use of private study time in the various study spaces around the college. Year 11 students are supported to develop their study and independent learning skills through enrolment in Study Centre classes. Staff are committed to supporting the academic progress and wellbeing of students where strong, respectful relationships are the basis for all communication. Students are encouraged to interact closely with their teachers and seek help at any time.

The college has a reputation for exemplary use of ICT and delivery of online learning. Students have high level access to ICT and the college operates a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model where students provide their own laptop or other device to support their learning. There is an emphasis on the use of blended delivery, which allows students to access digital curriculum resources to support the classroom instruction provided by teachers. This is enhanced by access to digital content developed through the Victorian Virtual Learning Network, a BSSC initiative where the college provides VCE online to students in schools around the state in Science & Maths studies.

An online portal is available which allows parents to monitor attendance, work completion and achievement in real time and provides for the approval of absences. Teachers upload key assessment outcomes and comments in a progressive reporting model.

A strength of our college is the expertise and commitment of our dedicated staff. Teachers at BSSC play a leading role in state wide curriculum development, subject associations, VCAA assessment processes and in the professional learning of teachers across the state. All staff are expected to demonstrate the highest professional standards and a commitment to excellence. The college has a culture of self-reflection and continuous improvement, which is supported by a rigorous performance and development process, allowing recognition of outstanding work and identification of areas for further improvement.

A wide range of VCE studies is offered and students can select units in Business and Information Technology, English, Health & Physical Education, Languages & EAL, Humanities, Mathematics, Performing Arts & Media, Science and Technology and Visual Arts. An accelerated learning program operates in conjunction with the four government 7-10 colleges where students are able to undertake some VCE studies whilst in Year 10 and are then encouraged to undertake a Unit 3/4 study in their first year at the college. The college offers a range of specialist VCE programs which extend and challenge students with a passion in a particular curriculum area.

Pathways in VCAL are offered at Intermediate and Senior levels to support students with an applied learning preference, with opportunities for students to theme their subject selection in a vocational interest area.

Student programs are tailored to meet the learning, wellbeing and pathway goals of each student. Programs can include combinations of studies at Unit 1/2 and 3/4 level, completing the VCE/VCAL over three years or negotiating a program to meet individual student health, school based apprenticeship or elite sport training commitments. We have a close relationship with the four government Year 7-10 colleges in Bendigo and work together around orientation activities and pathways advice to support students in making informed program choices and a positive transition to our college.

The college is a Registered Training Organisation with many Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs on its scope of registration. Strong relationships with other training providers in Bendigo and our Trade Training Centre provides our students with access to excellent vocational training facilities and opportunities.

As a senior secondary education provider we specialise in assisting students to make a positive transition to the next stage of their lives after high school, whether that is to University or other study, apprenticeships or traineeships or directly on to employment. Extensive careers and pathways advice is available to students and is complemented by the individual support provided through the college House structure in which each student is linked to an Advisor who closely monitors their wellbeing and progress. Additional support to assist students to stay engaged with their learning is provided through our Wellbeing Team. Students can access support from our Student Wellbeing Advisors, Youth Health Nurse or other visiting department staff. We also provide access to GP and mental health nurse services on site.

NETschool is a second campus of the college, providing curriculum access for 15 to 18 year old students who have been outside mainstream schooling or training. NETschool provides both online and face to face delivery of VCE, VCAL and VET units from its central city location.

The college provides outstanding facilities to support student learning in a combination of historic and modern facilities. More recent modernised or new building projects have included the Ulumbarra Performing Arts Centre which incorporates a 1000 seat theatre, café and foods/hospitality facilities, and a new Student Services Centre. In 2018 a new library, VCAL learning centre and modernised learning spaces will open. Other purpose built facilities include our Language Centre which incorporates our Karrang Kunga (Indigenous) Centre and our Trade Training Centre. Each of these areas contain casual student study spaces and high level access to ICT.

One of the features of the college for many years has been the presence of students from other countries, including many from China, who come to study as fee paying students or through exchange programs. These students are supported in homestay arrangements with local families who provide cultural and language enrichment experiences. We are proud of the work we do to support New Arrival and refugee students. Intensive EAL support is provided and a homework club operates to serve these students from the college and other Bendigo secondary schools.

The college highly values the contribution of our indigenous student population. These students are assisted by mentors and a range of additional support services which are closely linked to families and community.

In 2001 BSSC became the first government school in the world to be accredited with the Council of International Schools and in 2011 gained reaccreditation. The international focus of the college is wide ranging and includes sister school relationships in China, France, Germany and Indonesia. Students can participate in curriculum and intercultural learning exchanges to these countries, and also to Italy and Greece. College curriculum has also developed a focus on Asia literacy and the building of student global perspectives.

The college runs a very successful Confucius Classroom program in partnership with the Chinese government agency, Hanban, and a Chinese sister school. This program attracts high quality Chinese teachers to Bendigo who deliver Chinese language and culture programs into over twenty Bendigo primary and secondary schools and evening classes for the broader Bendigo community. This program is supporting young people from around the region to access an additional language and build their intercultural competence.

At BSSC we believe that every child is capable of achieving and has a right to a high quality education which will empower them with the attitude, knowledge and skills necessary for success in life and work beyond school.

For further information about the College visit www.bssc.edu.au

2. College values and vision

Our college is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our college acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

Our college is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Please see our Bullying Prevention Policy (see Appendix 1) for more information.

Our vision:

Our ROLE is to empower learners for individual, community and global leadership.
We value Respect, Optimism, Learning, Environment.

Respect means:

- Respecting ourselves, others and our relationships.
- Respecting ourselves and others in all we think, say and do.
- Respecting our learning, community and environment.

Optimism means:

- Being enthusiastic in our living, learning and contributing.
- Embracing opportunities to make a difference.
- Being resilient and persistent in adversity.

Learning means:

- Embracing learning opportunities.
- Being a lifelong learner.
- Being a continuously improving individual and community member.
- Being a leader of self and of others.
- Being innovative and open to possibilities.

Environment means contribution to:

- The culture we make through our beliefs and actions.
- The community we make through our relationships with others.
- Sustainability and planetism through wisdom, balance and action.
- Being a responsible global citizen.

For full details of the BSSC Rights and Responsibilities, please see Appendix 2.

3. Guiding principles

- The college will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-college engagement and behaviour management approach.
- The college's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- The college will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The college will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The college promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating college change.

- The college will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The college will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- The college will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our college and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.
- The college will create a child safe organisation and will comply with its obligations under the Child Safe Standards (see Section 7 for more information on the Child Safe Standards).

4. Engagement Strategies

To realise our vision, our college has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the college. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need.

The college works collaboratively with students and parents/carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the college's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

The universal (whole-school), targeted (group-specific) and individual engagement strategies used in our college are outlined in Appendix 3.

5. Identifying students in need of extra support

Our college utilises the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra support using the following strategies:

Personal information gathered upon enrolment

Identification strategies include:

- liaison with DET 7-10 colleges to ensure information about student's medical conditions, wellbeing needs, special learning needs, living arrangements, custody restrictions, engagement barriers and other relevant information is transferred to BSSC.
- a structured set of questions used for the Blast Off interviews.

- Advisor structure allows the gathering of student information through Student/Advisor conversations.
- access for parents and students to staff – can be contacted at anytime via the Compass portal.
- structured questions and response items included in the Individual Education Plans that students complete, associated with the parent/carer/teacher/student interviews involved.
- 1:1 interviews with students through roles as classroom teachers, NETschool mentors, Advisors, Learning and Engagement Coordinators (LECs), etc, where external support groups and agencies may be referenced (eg. headspace, social worker etc)
- student activities providing a focus for students to locate people to share information and access available supports to provide information.
- other opportunities for information gathering include: The SEAS/Special Consideration identification process, Parent/Carer/Teacher/Student (P/C/T/S) interviews, Managed Individual Pathways/Careers interviews, Workplacement process, Registered Training Organisation Vocational Education and Training (VET) registrations, Full Details Checks through the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) and the Financial Support application process.

Attendance rates

The attendance rates of all students are closely monitored by Advisors, the Attendance Support Officer and LECs. Intervention occurs at any time when concerning patterns are emerging, however the college abides by the agreed attendance follow up procedures, to ensure a consistency of practice across the college. The college has published Attendance follow up procedures (see Appendix 4) and an Attendance Policy (see Appendix 5).

Academic performance (particularly in literacy and numeracy assessments)

Identification strategies include:

- application of the Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Policy for VET, which encompasses LLN testing and a Pyramid of Supports for targeted adjustments.
- literacy and numeracy testing through the transition process to determine the suitability of subject choice. Support comes from subsequent planning of differentiated learning activities. Support may also be in the form of course counselling (to more suitable subject levels).
- testing of students with identified learning difficulties as appropriate.
- use of Compass portal Insights information per student.
- use of Multicultural Education Aide Support.
- ACER testing at NETschool for literacy pre-testing.

Behaviour observed by classroom teachers

Identification strategies include:

- use of professional training, which is supported by professional development. This includes Wellbeing Team supported sessions and scenarios. The training informs classroom teachers on how to identify changes in student behaviour and carry out effective 1:1 discussions with students to identify support needs.

- tracking Empowered Learner Indicator (ELI) changes, to identify learning behaviours in need of additional support.
- tracking Compass portal Chronicle posts and sharing information about student behaviours.

Engagement with student families

Identification strategies include:

- information sharing through conversations around the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), discussed at Blast Off interviews.
- phone calls home as Advisors and as classroom teachers.
- the identification of student needs through Financial Support applications.
- progressive reporting and regular progress reports.
- two-way communication through the Compass portal.
- conducting Student Support Group (SSG) meetings for students in Out of Home Care (OoHC), students receiving funding through the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) and other students, as needed.

6. Behaviour expectations

Bendigo Senior Secondary College has shared expectations of the principal, teachers and college staff, students and parents/carers.

The Principal, Teachers and Education Support Staff

Bendigo Senior Secondary College has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued, feel connected to the college, are engaged in their learning and experience success. The principal, teachers and education support staff will:

- deliver an inclusive, comprehensive and challenging curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the wellbeing of every student.
- employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students.
- focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues.
- consistently apply the Rights and Responsibilities and Respectful Learner Responsibilities through a shared collegiate understanding and only exclude students in extreme circumstances.
- recognise that for some students additional support may be needed in the form of staged responses and is committed to working with families to reintegrate students after exclusion.

Students

Bendigo Senior Secondary College provides a setting where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and personal development in a supportive environment. Students should

- participate fully in the college's educational program.
- respect the rights of others to learn and to teach.
- assist in the provision of a safe environment through personal behaviour and vigilance in addressing issues of bullying, including cyberbullying, and harassment, as outlined in the Bullying Prevention Policy (see Appendix 1).
- model the college's core values of Respect, Optimism, Learning and Environment and our Respectful Learner Responsibilities.
- take responsibility for their behaviour and its impact on others.
- comply with all reasonable requests of staff and all college policies.
- maximise opportunities for success through full attendance and bringing correct equipment to all classes.
- work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to achieve academic and personal goals.

Parents/carers

Bendigo Senior Secondary College encourages a partnership with the young person's parent/carer and the college to promote positive educational outcomes for students. To assist in supporting their student to achieve personal and academic goals parents/carers should

- maintain regular communication with the college regarding their student's learning and wellbeing needs.
- support their student's full attendance in the college's educational program.
- support the college in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment.
- actively engage in opportunities to support their student's transition into, within and out of the college.
- have high expectations of their student's behaviour and an understanding of the college's behavioural expectations, as outlined in the Rights and Responsibilities (see Appendix 2).
- cooperate with the college by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs.

Inclusivity in the college community

The college aims to address inclusivity by

- actively supporting the enrolment of students from different cultures into the college through a structured transition process.
- the provision of a designated English as an Additional Language curriculum.
- the employment of highly skilled and qualified staff to support students from other cultures.
- the provision of a community based Homestay program for international fee paying students.
- utilising the support of a Koorie Education Support Officer (KESO) and an Indigenous Programs Coordinator to support the educational needs and inclusivity of all Indigenous students.
- the support of a Student Support Coordinator for all students with a disability and their programs, including providing individualised advice to each student's teacher and conducting regular Student Support Group meetings for PSD students.

- establishing a student-led support group for students who identify as LGBTI and training a group of staff members as LGBTI 'allies', who can provide extra support to these students.
- conducting whole college celebrations of important cultural events, such as Cultural Diversity Week and Reconciliation Week.

For further information on college community expectations, please see the DET Statement of Values (Appendix 6).

7. College actions

Responding to challenging behaviour

Where a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our college community, we will institute a staged response (see *Appendix 7 - Staged response checklist for student behaviour issues*).

Discipline

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to challenging behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to address the range of factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour. Examples of how discipline will be applied for various breaches of behaviour expectations can be found at Appendix 8.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- Restorative approach (e.g. repairing damage caused).
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from class activities for a specified period. Parents/carers will be informed of such withdrawals.
- Suspension (in-school and out of school).
- Expulsion.

Discipline will be applied in a way that is proportionate to the behaviour and upholds procedural fairness.

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian colleges. Corporal punishment will NOT be used at the college under any circumstances.

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be applied when the grounds for suspension and expulsion set out in the Engagement and Inclusion Guidance have been met.

Suspension and expulsion can only be approved by the Principal and our college will follow the processes for applying these disciplinary measures set out in the [Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance](#).

Information on grounds and processes for suspension and expulsion that our college will follow are available here:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/discipline.aspx>

Creating a child safe organisation

The college is committed to being a child safe organisation. It will do this by complying with the requirements of the Child Safe Standards including having strategies in place to embed a culture of child safety at the college, having a child safety policy and having policies and procedures to manage reports, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.

The college has a Child Safety Code of Conduct (see Appendix 9), a Child Safety Statement of Commitment (see Appendix 10) and a Mandatory Reporting policy (see Appendix 11).

8. Engaging with families

The college values parent/carer input into its operations and curriculum offerings and welcomes feedback at any time. The college actively seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion survey, and from parent representatives on College Council.

The college supports families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning.

The college seeks to create successful partnerships with parents/carers and families in a variety of ways. We ensure that all college policies are available through the college website (www.bssc.edu.au) and that parents/carers have opportunities to contribute to their development and review through College Council. A summary of the Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy is also provided to parents through the enrolment process.

There is an ongoing focus on increasing opportunities for college-to-home and home-to-college communications. This begins with our Blast Off interviews at the commencement of the school year and is ongoing through our Advisor Program. Compass, our online portal, provides a range of functions that facilitates college-to-home communications. Examples include progressive reporting, positive Compass portal Chronicle postings, attendance and at risk notifications, posts on parents' and students' news feeds, SMS messages, weekly eNews. Compass provides home-to-college communications through an email facility and Parent/carer/teacher/student interviews are held each semester. Our social media platforms are also regularly used to engage our parents/carers.

Parents/carers of our EAL students are also supported to engage with the college. Relevant documents are translated into different languages and interpreters are provided when needed.

Parents/carers are invited to volunteer to be part of our college program through involvement in areas such as extra curricula activities, sporting events and excursions. Many opportunities are in place to showcase student achievements to our college community.

There is significant parent/carer engagement opportunities through our transition program. Our Open Days, information evenings, course counselling sessions, assemblies, Awards Night and Graduation are examples of ways in which we welcome our parents/carers into the college.

Parents/carers responsibilities for supporting their child's attendance and engagement are outlined in the Attendance Policy (see appendix 5). Parents/carers are expected to act in a respectful and constructive manner when dealing with our college. More detail on parent/carer responsibilities and consequences for inappropriate behaviour are outlined in Section 6 and in the DET Statement of Values (see appendix 6).

9. Evaluation

Data collection and analysis

Data will be collected regarding all school improvement measures, so as to measure the success or otherwise of college-based strategies and approaches.

Some of sources of data used are:

- the Student Attitudes to School Survey data.
- Parent Opinion Survey data.
- Staff Opinion Survey data.
- data from case management work with students.
- data extracted from software such as Compass portal, BSSC online enrolment system, CASES21 (Computerised Administrative System Environment in Schools) or SOCS (Student Online Case System).

Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

10. Appendices and Related Policies

- Appendix 1: Bullying Prevention policy
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Appendix 11: Mandatory Reporting policy