

Student Wellbeing Policy

The following policy has been written with respect to the guiding principles of the St Aloysius College Mission Statement and Mercy Education Values.

St Aloysius College is a Child Safe School that acknowledges the duty of care owed to students. We commit to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people in our care.

Introduction

Student wellbeing at St Aloysius College is central to all that we do and is the responsibility of all staff members to maintain the wellbeing of everyone in our care. As a community we strive for our students to be personally fulfilled, to know their own worth and to enjoy participating actively in the life of the College. As a Mercy School we are inspired by our Mercy Education values of Justice, Compassion, Hospitality, Courage, Respect and Service.

St Aloysius College operated as a girls' secondary college until 2023 when it transitioned to co-education and accepted the first intake of boys at Year 7. The College's commitment to the wellbeing of all students is at the forefront of all that we do. Our approach and strategies to wellbeing and pastoral care consider the needs of individual students while being mindful to monitor their suitability and effectiveness in a co-education setting. Key principles underpinning this commitment include establishing a culturally safe environment, ensuring that equity is upheld, diversity respected, students are empowered in regard to their rights, and that we pay particular attention to the needs of students who are vulnerable.

Section 1: Pastoral Care - Introduction

Pastoral Care at St Aloysius College embeds strategies for creating and maintaining a school culture that ensures all young people are known, feel safe, valued, and respected through inclusive, equitable and accessible Pastoral Care. Social and Emotion Learning (SEL) is an active part of the Pastoral Care Programs provided to support the wellbeing and learning needs of the students. SEL is the process through which all our students acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to manage emotions, achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Student wellbeing encompasses interrelationships, responsibilities of students and staff and behaviour management.

1.1 Pastoral Care - Staff Roles

The pastoral care of our students is the responsibility of every staff member. The following personnel have specific wellbeing responsibilities:

- Assistant Principal – Student Engagement and Wellbeing

The Assistant Principal - Student Engagement and Wellbeing is responsible for the coordination of pastoral care across Years 7 -12 and oversees the management of student behaviour.

- College Psychologist

The College Psychologist's role is to support students in developing appropriate strategies and coping skills to address academic, psychological, emotional and/or social concerns utilising an evidence-based approach. The College Psychologist engages the wider college community including staff and parent/carer(s) as required through the provision of support strategies and Psycho-education sessions. The College Psychologist also provides students with a range of wellbeing sessions relevant to each year level that is age-appropriate and sensitive to cultural or other sensitivities and/or vulnerabilities.

- Learning Diversity Leader

The Learning Diversity Leader supports all members of the College to identify and support students with disabilities, social-emotional disorders, and those with diverse or special learning needs.

- Year Level Leader

The Year Level Leader develops and implements education and wellbeing programs which foster a sense of belonging and connectedness. The Year Level Leader fosters a climate which generates staff knowledge of all students and their needs.

- Pastoral Leader

The Pastoral Leader monitors, in a pastoral sense, the progress of each student in the Pastoral Group. The Pastoral Leader is central in the provision and delivery of activities that are part of the Pastoral Care Programs. They are aware of any known sensitivities and/or vulnerabilities, such as disability and cultural or linguistic backgrounds.

- First Aid Officer

The College's Health Centre is attended by the First Aid Officer who provides first-aid and medical assistance to our students. Where appropriate to a student's health and wellbeing, the First Aid Officer will update relevant staff in relation to the student's medical alerts. Professional development relating to student health and safety is delivered to staff as required to ensure adequate support for all students who have diagnosed or temporary health or medical conditions.

1.2 Features of Pastoral Care at St Aloysius College include:

- Mercy Values

The interactions of all members of the college community are positive, inclusive, and based on the Mercy Educational Values of Respect, Justice, Hospitality, Courage, Service and Compassion.

- Child Safe School

St Aloysius College acknowledge the duty of care owed to students and commits to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people in our care.

- Effective and age-appropriate Pastoral Care Programs

The Pastoral Care Programs are developed to nurture, support, and assist students to flourish and reach their spiritual, academic, social and emotional potential. Year level focused Pastoral Care Programs assist students to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills to function effectively

as positive, responsible, respectful, and ethical citizens. The programs focus on, but are not limited to, self-esteem, social relationships, vocational awareness, health and personal safety, community involvement and social justice.

- Mindfulness

The Mindfulness Program is part of a whole school approach to Positive Education at St Aloysius College. The Pastoral Care Programs complement this approach and provide a range of appropriate weekly workshops for students at each year level.

- School/Family Relationships

A strong partnership exists between the College and our parent/carer(s) as an important aspect to supporting our students' academic and wellbeing growth. We strive to be culturally sensitive and inclusive and involve families in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

- Support Network

Where appropriate, the College will assist and empower our students to connect with external support agencies within the wider community.

2 Ensuring Inclusivity within Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Programs

To ensure inclusivity within Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Programs the College implements the following:

- Information, including Child Safe, is made available to all students in age-appropriate ways
- Students are informed about their rights, including to safety, information and participation
- Provides information about how students can raise concerns such as through the Year Level Student Voice groups
- Strategies are utilised to develop a culture that:
 - recognized the importance of friendship
 - facilitates participation
 - is responsive to student input

2.1 Responses to Unique Pastoral Needs of Students

Within Catholic school communities, all children and young people are welcomed and supported to grow and flourish into the fullness of life. One of the fundamental duties of a school is to ensure that every student is kept safe and led into the fullness of life that God wants for each human person. We believe that every person is made in the image of God, and this belief expands our way of seeing the human person; we are all more than just one aspect of our identity and, therefore, no one can be reduced to a label. The below information has been developed to assist Catholic schools to respond to some of the unique pastoral and learning needs of students. Each response considers the circumstances of the particular student as well as any sensitivities and/or vulnerabilities. St Aloysius College is aware of the necessity to adapt responses to students since the College became a co-educational school.

2.2 Sexual Orientation

Sexuality is a fundamental dimension of the human person. It profoundly affects feelings, self-image, communication with others, and the expressing and living out of love. Within the mission and needs of the college community, those students experiencing same-sex attraction are accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Any unjust discrimination in their regard must be avoided.

Definitions

Sexual orientation: a person's physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual attraction towards another person.

It is defined in the legislation as 'a person's sexual orientation towards:

- a) persons of the same sex; or
- b) persons of a different sex; or
- c) persons of the same sex and persons of a different sex' (Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) p. 8).

Heterosexual: people who are attracted physically, emotionally, spiritually, and sexually to people of the opposite sex.

Homosexual: people who are attracted physically, emotionally, spiritually, and sexually to people of the same sex.

Bisexual: people who are attracted physically, emotionally, spiritually, and sexually to people of the opposite and same sex.

Procedural considerations

In creating culturally safe, inclusive environments and communities of companionship and growth, where equity is upheld and diversity respected in policy and practice, schools should consider the following multi-faceted approach.

Accompany

- Professional learning and training in appropriate and relevant areas is provided for staff to enable the required competency, professionalism and sensitivity to work proficiently in this area.
- Students are encouraged and welcomed to share their journey of growth and development within the school setting. The role of staff is to provide a guiding presence to the students in their care, affirm all that is life giving and challenge aspects that are likely to harm or unfairly limit students' development.
- The pastoral needs of students who are experiencing challenges related to their identity or sexual orientation need to be sensitively and confidentially addressed in partnership with the student, their parent/carer(s) and relevant experts.

Actions should include:

- The development of a school management plan to ensure necessary educational adjustments are made so that students are not discriminated against, either directly or indirectly.
- A management plan should clearly state expectations and identified strategies to assist the school to provide agreed pastoral and learning supports. Effective management plans contribute to building respectful relationships and resilience. This enables students to feel safe, valued and connected to their school community so that they may effectively engage with their learning. Management plans assist schools to discharge their duty of care to students via appropriate planning.

- Facilitate access to confidential counselling services to students and their families and referrals to specialised agencies as required.
- Supporting the wellbeing, affirming the dignity, and considering the needs of all students in the school community.
- The formation of groups which intentionally include students with particular needs is to be encouraged but not if they label students. Establishing exclusive support groups or withdrawal spaces for students that are questioning their sexual identity is not encouraged as these may prove counterproductive by isolating students from the mainstream student body. The research (Parkinson 2014) demonstrates that students experience better outcomes for their wellbeing when they remain connected to their peers, rather than being separated from them.
- Encourage family connectedness as this has been shown to impact positively on the mental health of young people questioning their sexuality (Eisenberg & Resnick 2006; Society for Adolescent Health & Medicine 2013).
- Seek parental consent for all sexuality programs and encourage active involvement of the parent/carer(s).
- Safeguard age-appropriate education in human sexuality programs is culturally sensitive and inclusive.
- Focus on the use of inclusive language and challenge the use of discriminatory language within the school environment.
- Ensure out-of-hours school functions that offer the opportunity for students to bring a guest (i.e. school formals) are inclusive and welcoming.

2.3 Gender Dysphoria

In responding to the unique learning and support needs of gender dysphoric children and young people in Catholic school settings, all decision making between the Principal, parent/carer(s), child, gender dysphoria medical experts, treating specialist(s) and relevant governing authorities should be guided by the principles of:

- a) inclusion, respect, and dignity for the human person
- b) collaboration and open, constructive and non-judgmental dialogue
- c) active listening and cooperation
- d) discernment, objectivity, and fairness.

(MACS Policy 2.31 Pastoral Care for students experiencing gender dysphoria)

Definitions

Sex: a biological term dividing a species into male and female, usually based on physical, hormonal, chromosomal and genetic characteristics.

Intersex: the status of having physical, hormonal genetic or chromosomal features that are:

- a) neither wholly female nor wholly male; (or)
- b) a combination of female and male; (or)
- c) neither female nor male' (Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)).

Being intersex is about biological variations, not about a person's gender identity. People with intersex variations share the same range of sexual orientation and gender identities as people with no intersex variations.

Gender: a person's identity as male or female, harmonious with one's biological sex upon birth

Gender Identity: one's own concept of self as male or female. The way in which individuals perceive and describe themselves. It is defined in the legislation as 'the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not) with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth' (Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)).

Gender Dysphoria: a marked incongruence between the natal (birth) gender and the experienced/expressed gender of the person (APA 2013).

Transgender: a person whose gender identity is different to their biological sex.

Gender Transitioning: the process where a transgender person commences living as a member of another sex. This may occur through medical intervention, style of dressing, or anything else that indicates an intention to commence living permanently as a member of another sex.

Procedural considerations

It is required of the College to exercise caution, prudence, and sensitivity in establishing how best to respond to the unique pastoral and learning needs of gender dysphoric children and young people. It is the role of families, supported by the school, to accompany students on their growth into maturity and help them understand the changes that are taking place.

The College is bound to provide a nurturing environment that frees students to discover who they are, to appreciate their significant relationships, and to know that they are loved.

Under state and federal laws, it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their gender, intersex status, or sexual orientation. At St Aloysius College we take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

The College will enact a management plan which will distinguish between the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development of the students and include the provision of specialist counselling. We will identify and establish clear expectations, strategies, and actions. In doing so we seek to enable students to feel safe, valued and connected to their school community so that they may effectively engage with their learning.

Provisions within the management plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they continue to meet and reflect the wellbeing and educational needs of the gender dysphoric student, their family, and the school community.

In developing and enacting a school management plan for a student diagnosed with gender dysphoria, the Principal will:

- a) Within the concept of 'community of care', engage in ongoing dialogue with the child and their parent/carer(s), gender dysphoria experts, other specialist(s) and relevant governing authorities to identify strategies to assist the school to provide agreed pastoral and learning support in accordance with their age, capability and maturity. This may include consulting on:
 - the referencing of and recording of student's preferred name, gender identity, and preferred use of pronouns
 - the use of toilets, showers and change rooms that meet the needs of the student
 - the appropriate uniform that reflects the gender identity of the student and meets the College's Uniform Policy.
- b) Request relevant medical reports and supporting documentation from gender dysphoria medical experts and other treating specialists. Gender dysphoria experts for children and young people up to

age 17 are available through Royal Children's Hospital, Parkville. Adolescents over the age of 17 can be referred to the Monash Gender Dysphoria Clinic, Hampton.

- c) Maintain privacy and confidentiality in accordance with relevant legislation. The sharing of information should only be communicated with those who have an appropriate reason to know in order to support the wellbeing and learning outcomes of the student.
- d) Ensure the student is not subject to bullying, harassment and/or discrimination either directly or indirectly.
- e) Include the provision of relevant professional learning and information for staff, students, and families within the school community to raise understanding of gender dysphoria within the context of Catholic teachings about human sexuality.
- f) Consider the pastoral and academic needs of all members of the school community with the individual needs of the child experiencing gender dysphoria and their family.
- g) Update school policies, where appropriate, to reflect arrangements for gender dysphoric students.

Principals should contact the Manager, Student Wellbeing Unit at MACS for additional advice and support.

Section 2: Student Behaviour Management

Students are given the opportunity to participate in informal and formal discussions relating to the definition of acceptable behaviours, in order to understand their responsibilities to themselves and the collective wellbeing of their class and college community. St Aloysius College is a Restorative Practice school. This framework underpins all interactions within the college community and promotes respectful relationships and the opportunity for positive outcomes for all. The Student Management Plan supports staff to act effectively in resolving a range of issues. In addition, the Mercy Education Values provide the framework for the delivery of pastoral care and student learning programs at the College.

St Aloysius College abides by all relevant legislations and as such corporal punishment is prohibited.

2.1 Classroom Expectations

Students in all learning environments are to follow the values of:

1. *Hospitality* – welcoming teachers and students into the shared class space promoting inclusion and equity
2. *Respect* – all individuals learn in a safe space
3. *Compassion* – tolerance and acceptance of learning diversity and individuality in the learning environment
4. *Courage* – environment allows for challenge, shared communication, and growth
5. *Justice* – reminding class members about fairness and access to learning in the classroom environment
6. *Service* – adhering to behavioral and academic expectations set by teachers and students to support and inclusive learning environment.

2.1.2 Classroom Management Strategies

1. Commencing the lesson - Hospitality and Respect:
 - Teachers and students ensure a welcoming greeting at the beginning of each lesson and express gratitude at the end of each lesson.
 - Laptops are not to be opened unless invited by the teacher
2. Conducting the Lesson – Courage & Justice:
 - Students should not disrupt the learning of others
 - Teachers should set expectations for polite interactions and a calm learning environment e.g. discourage shouting out of answers, allowing all students (including introverts) the opportunity to express their knowledge and the courage to ask questions
 - Teachers ensure differentiation in the lesson
3. General Pedagogy – Service & Compassion
 - Students ensure an environment free from criticism and negativity to promote equity, acceptance of learning diversity and student agency in the learning space
 - Responsibility for submission of work and timely feedback
 - Teachers providing additional supports and developing new strategies to increase access to learning for all students.

3. Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices assist staff, students, and other members of the community to maintain and restore relationships; the College understands that the most profound learning occurs where healthy relationships are fostered.

3.1 Implementing Restorative Practice – Responsibilities

- The Leadership Team will ensure that regular, ongoing training of staff is implemented in relation to Restorative Practice. Depending on the matter, particular individuals in Leadership may be involved in Restorative Practices between staff and students.
- Teaching Staff will follow the Guiding Principles of Restorative Practice
- Year Level Leaders will investigate the incident and guide the parties involved to resolution
- Non-teaching staff will communicate incidents to teachers, Year Level Leaders, Leadership staff as appropriate

3.2 Restorative Practices – Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles of Restorative Practices:	
Engage	in a learning process that supports a student to understand how others have been affected by their behaviour
	in a conversation that does not blame, judge, or accuse
	in a process that is accepting of ambiguities <i>Misbehaviour is often not "black and white". It is often unhelpful to focus solely on establishing proof or guilt and doing so can sometimes be destined to failure.</i>
	in a process where the deed is separated from the doer. <i>In doing so, we acknowledge the inappropriate behaviour, whilst maintaining a respectful and dignified relationship with those involved in a process whereby any serious wrongdoing and conflict is seen as an opportunity for learning</i>
Respond	With appropriate consequences, suited to the individual and the context.

These questions have been designed to facilitate restorative conversations.

Restorative Questions:	What happened?
	What were you thinking then/since?
	Who may have been affected by your choices? How?
	What could you have done differently?
	What needs to happen now to make things right? (<i>consequences</i>)

Actions Aligned with Restorative Practice	Unsupportive Actions
<p>Recognising and using the student’s misbehaviour as an opportunity for social and emotional learning.</p> <p>Restorative process that brings together everyone who is most immediately affected by the misconduct.</p> <p>Dialogue leading to understanding and action to repair and restore relationships with respect and dignity. Opportunity given to make amends and express remorse.</p>	<p>Efforts to suppress misbehavior based on the view that misbehaviour is evident of student failure.</p> <p>Authority driven disciplinary actions i.e. detention or rubbish collection, focuses only on the identified misbehaving students and is unrelated to resolving working relationships.</p> <p>Punishment and exclusion used to control misbehaviour limits opportunity for expressing remorse or making amends.</p>

3.3 Restorative Practices – Consequences

Restorative Practices do not imply an absence of consequences. Rather consequences are discussed with the student to suit the issue at hand and the individual student’s needs. As such, Restorative Practices is not a one size fits all approach. Restorative consequences are agreed actions or responses designed to directly compensate for the transgressions. Once the restorative consequence is complete the matter is ended.

Examples of Restorative Practice

Level	Infraction	Immediate Staff Response	Follow up Staff Action	Restorative Consequence for Students Involved
L1	Classroom disruption	De-escalate the disruption	Move student to a different area of the classroom	Verbal apology to the teacher with a commitment to contribute more positively in the future.
	Continued disruptive behaviour leading to verbal abuse	Discontinue engaging with the student	Teacher asks student to wait outside and emails YLL/ LL/colleague for assistance	Parents contacted Interview and Behavioral Support Plan likely implemented.
L2	Vandalism or property damage/theft	Photographic evidence Investigate security camera footage Gather written accounts from	Inform YLL Log information onto LMS YLL to convene subsequent meetings and	Apology letter to the Principal Help clean or repair affected areas Possible parent meeting

		witnesses and alleged offenders	initiate and monitor consequence	
L2	Putdowns, gossip, or interpersonal conflicts	Discontinue and disperse the students' communication Report students involved to YLL Log incident(s) on LMS	YLL to gather written accounts and investigative evidence (digital or otherwise)	Student offenders involved write a letter of apology to the individual(s) harmed Write a reflection on the incident(s) that displays remorse and empathy
L3	Misuse of technology – inappropriate photos or videos uploaded on social media	Confiscate mobile device Report students involved to YLL Log incident(s) on LMS	Gather digital evidence and interview students	Parents contacted Interview and Behavioural Support Plan likely implemented Additional educational awareness task may be required Write a letter of apology to the individual(s) harmed Serious incidences may result in Police involvement
L3	Physical Violence	Safely separate students Call for assistance Ensure additional students are not in danger Remove onlookers	Students interviewed by YLL Parents called and students are immediately collected from the College Students do not return to the College until an appointment is made with parents/carers, students, and member(s) of Leadership	Behavioural Support Plan implemented Write a letter of apology to the individual(s) harmed Additional educational awareness task may be required
Any reoffending may result in a formal meeting with parents/carers and members of Leadership. Interview and Behavioural Support Plan likely implemented.				

Possible negotiated transfer for most serious incidences.

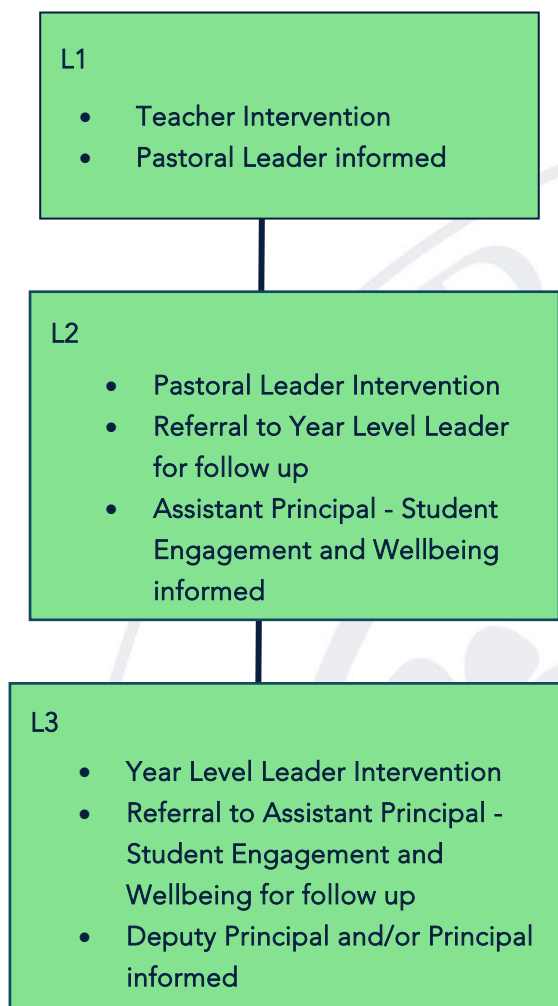
Students are supported to:

- take responsibility for their actions and learning
- demonstrate a willingness to learn whilst respecting the right of others to learn
- interact with others in a respectful and safe manner, including refraining from physical and/or aggressive behaviours
- refrain from the possession, use, distribution or selling of illicit drugs, prohibited substances including unauthorised use of medication whilst on school premises or at any function or activity/program organised by the College
- respect our environment by maintaining all areas in a clean and tidy manner
- look after their own belongings and to respect the property of others.
- represent the College and themselves in an appropriate manner both within the College grounds and in the wider community
- wear the full school uniform appropriately and with pride

Staff are required to:

- follow-up issues, according to the Student Management Plan flow chart and document student issues on the Learning Management System

Student Management Plan flow chart



Where student to student interactions are disrespectful or unsafe, these behaviours *maybe* categorised as bullying or harassment. Any form of harassment is contrary to the rights of the individual, weakens the college community and interferes with the effectiveness of the work and learning environment. Harassment/bullying of any person will not be tolerated. Respect for others is essential to enable the establishment of and support for positive relationships.

4. Student Code of Conduct

4.1 Student Code of Conduct Policy

The Student Code of Conduct Policy is available to all students, parents/carers, and staff.

4.2 Student Voice

Each year students contribute to a document developed by students, in the language of students, ensuring they hold themselves responsible for upholding the College Mission and Mercy Values, reporting bullying and refraining from participating in disrespectful and unsafe behaviour.

4.3 What is Disrespectful and Unsafe Behaviour?

Harassment is verbal, physical, psychological, or sexual conduct which is unwanted and uninvited. Bullying is a type of harassment. Bullying occurs when any member of the College is subjected to behaviour that is hurtful, threatening or frightening.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Stopbullying.gov

Cyber bullying is the use of various forms of electronic media to spread text and visual messages to cause hurt, embarrassment and/or intimidation.

Direct physical or verbal bullying may include hitting, tripping, pushing, insults, racist or verbal abuse. Indirect bullying can be harder to recognise and is often carried out behind the victim's back.

Examples of bullying may include:

- Name calling, teasing, ridiculing
- Physical violence
- Putting down others and their achievements
- Spreading rumors
- Throwing objects
- Demanding money or possessions
- Damaging, removing, hiding belongings
- Making nuisance calls, sending nuisance emails/text messages, or posting inappropriate messages online
- Making racist comments
- Behaving in a threatening way
- Glaring and making menacing gestures
- Deliberately leaving someone out of activities
- Making comments of a sexual nature
- Making negative or offensive comments about the family members of other people.

5. Responsibilities of Leadership in relation to Disrespectful and Unsafe Behaviour

Members of Leadership are to ensure that regular, ongoing training of staff is implemented in relation to responding appropriately and in a consistent manner to bullying, harassment and cyber-bullying that is aligned to Restorative Practices. Staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with related policies and procedures and are given reading material from organisations such as, eSafety Commissioner, Bullying No Way, and Bully Stoppers. Students are also given access to these resources and policies as part of the Nourish curriculum. The parent/carer(s) regularly receive online forum information from eSafety Commissioner, have access to policies and procedures regarding this behaviour and can access the Nourish curriculum via the Learning Management System. Articles published in the College newsletter via the College website are also a means of educating and informing the parent/carer(s).

5.1 Responsibilities of the College in relation to Bullying, Harassment and Cyber-bullying

The College will:

- Act upon all reported cases of bullying

- Respond appropriately to incidents of bullying in line with the policy and the principles of Restorative Practice and be sensitive to the cultural and diverse backgrounds and circumstances of the students
- Ensure responses to bullying and cyber-bullying are sensitive to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and recognise the diverse circumstances of students
- Offer the victim support and help
- Treat any retaliatory incident against a person who has reported bullying, or any case of a deliberate, false accusation of bullying, seriously
- Investigate reports of bullying and cyber-bullying respecting the dignity and privacy of those involved
- Notify the parent/carer(s) of bullying incidents involving their children and allowing them to have input into decisions that affect their children, where this is appropriate
- Encourage the students, staff, parent/carer(s) to report any type of bullying incident to the class teacher, Year Level Leader, members of the Senior Leadership Team or the Principal
- Promote student voice and empowerment in classrooms and student forums with discussion on matters associated with bullying, cyber bullying, safety and wellbeing
- Contact the Police/Police Youth Liaison Officer if the bullying situation has involved violence, threat of harm or alleged criminal conduct
- Ensure staff engage in professional learning to support appropriate anti-bullying responses which could include cyber safety, restorative justice practices, mediation and developing social skills in students. Such opportunities are made available to staff on the same basis as other professional learning.
- Support the student anti-bullying and responsible use of technology procedures through positive modelling, the promotion of appropriate behaviour and a consistent approach that is aligned to restorative practices.
- Maintain records of bullying incidents and related interventions in accordance with relevant recordkeeping requirements (such as the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards)
- Communicate the College's zero tolerance of bullying and updates of the Student Wellbeing Policy, to students, staff and parents via pastoral care, the newsletter, and the College website. For staff, it is periodically covered in professional learning, staff meetings and other forums to support staff to develop appropriate responses and strategies.

5.2 Procedure for Students in relation to Bullying, Harassment and Cyber-bullying

Students who experience bullying should:

- Discuss the situation with someone they trust e.g. parent/carer, friend, relation, Pastoral Leader, Teacher, Psychologist, Year Level Leader. If they feel confident enough to do so, they should tell the person who is bullying or harassing them to stop.
- Walk away from the situation to an area where they feel safe.
- Follow advice given to address the issue.

Other students can:

- If possible, help and support the student who is being bullied
- Refuse to join in
- Talk to someone they trust who can help
- Report the bullying

- If they feel confident enough to do so, tell the person responsible for bullying to stop

The person doing the bullying should:

- Stop the bullying behaviour immediately
- Try to understand how words and/or actions chosen, have been harmful and learn from the experience
- Follow strategies and advice given to address the issue
- For repeat incidents of bullying, formal interviews with the student, their parent/carer(s) and the Year Level Leader will take place. The Assistant Principal - Student Engagement and Wellbeing and the Deputy Principal may also be involved
- Every effort will be made to ensure that relationships are restored and that students feel safe, comfortable, and able to learn at school. In many instances, this will require all the students involved to come together in a meeting mediated by the Year Level Leader, the College Psychologist, the Assistant Principal - Student Engagement and Wellbeing and/or the Deputy Principal.

Consequences for students who bully other students will be decided in accordance with individual circumstances and the College Restorative Practices procedures.

6. Sexual Offending

Examples of extreme disrespectful behaviour, student-to-student, may include offending of a sexual nature. The following table (Four Critical Actions for Schools – Responding to Student Sexual Offending), supports school staff to understand their responsibilities for responding to and reporting sexual offending by students. This guide replaces the previous DET protocols documented in the Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Offending. **Please Note:** Refer to *Mandatory Reporting Policy Appendix A, 4.7– Failure to Report*.

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS Responding to Student Sexual Offending

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

As a school staff member you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- You must act by following the 4 critical actions as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a suspicion that a student is a victim of a student sexual offending and/or a student has engaged in sexual offending
- You must act even if you are unsure and have not directly observed student sexual offending (eg. if a victim, or another person tells you about the offence)
- You must use the *Responding to Student Sexual Offending* template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.



1 IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO AN INCIDENT	2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES	3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS	4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT			
<p>If there is no risk of immediate harm go to Action 2.</p> <p>If a child is at immediate risk of harm you MUST ensure their safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> separating alleged victims and others involved administering first aid calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police. <p>Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.</p>	<p>As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you MUST report incidents, suspicions and disclosures of student sexual offending as soon as possible:</p> <p>VICTORIA POLICE All instances on 000</p> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION If you believe that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the victim's parent/carers are unable or unwilling to protect the child the student who is alleged to have engaged in the student sexual offending is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aged over 10 and under 15 years and may be in need of therapeutic treatment to address these behaviours may be displaying physical and behavioural indicators of being the victim of child abuse*. <p>You must identify a contact person at the school for future liaison with Victoria Police and/or Child Protection and seek advice about contacting parents/carers (see Action 3).</p> <p>*See the <i>Four Critical Steps for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse</i> for further guidance in these circumstances.</p>	<p>Your Principal MUST consult with Victoria Police or DHHS Child Protection to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers of all impacted students. They may advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not to contact the parents/carers (eg. in circumstances where contacting the parents/carers is likely to adversely affect a Victoria Police investigation or where the student is a mature minor and has requested that their parent/carer not be notified) to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion). 	<p>Your school must provide support for students who are victim to a student sexual offence AND students who have engaged in a sexual offence. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements. This support should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals, outlining support strategies. Strategies may include the development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.</p>			
<p>CONTACT</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION</p> <p>AREA</p> <p>North Division 1300 864 9777</p> <p>South Division 1300 655 795</p> <p>East Division 1300 360 391</p> <p>West Division (Rural) 1600 075 599</p> <p>West Division (Metro) 1300 864 9777</p> <p>AFTER HOURS</p> <p>After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78</p> </td> <td> <p>CHILD FIRST</p> <p>www.dhhs.vic.gov.au</p> <p>VICTORIA POLICE</p> <p>000 or contact your local police station</p> <p>DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT</p> <p>(03) 9589 6266</p> <p>STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT</p> <p>(03) 9637 2934</p> </td> <td> <p>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH</p> <p>(03) 9637 2595</p> <p>DIOCESAN OFFICE</p> <p>Melbourne (03) 9267 0228</p> <p>Bairat (08) 5327 7135</p> <p>Salz (03) 5622 6800</p> <p>Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377</p> <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA</p> <p>(03) 9825 7200</p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION</p> <p>AREA</p> <p>North Division 1300 864 9777</p> <p>South Division 1300 655 795</p> <p>East Division 1300 360 391</p> <p>West Division (Rural) 1600 075 599</p> <p>West Division (Metro) 1300 864 9777</p> <p>AFTER HOURS</p> <p>After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78</p>	<p>CHILD FIRST</p> <p>www.dhhs.vic.gov.au</p> <p>VICTORIA POLICE</p> <p>000 or contact your local police station</p> <p>DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT</p> <p>(03) 9589 6266</p> <p>STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT</p> <p>(03) 9637 2934</p>	<p>EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH</p> <p>(03) 9637 2595</p> <p>DIOCESAN OFFICE</p> <p>Melbourne (03) 9267 0228</p> <p>Bairat (08) 5327 7135</p> <p>Salz (03) 5622 6800</p> <p>Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377</p> <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA</p> <p>(03) 9825 7200</p>
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7. Management of Drug Related Incidents

"The possession, use, distribution or selling of illicit drugs on school premises at any function or activity organised by the school is prohibited. Schools should have clearly defined policies and procedures relating to illicit drugs included in the school's drug education policy.

In the case of incidents involving illicit or unsanctioned drug use at the school, initial actions and responses should focus on the safety and wellbeing of those directly and indirectly involved.

If the Principal of a school has knowledge of the use, possession and distribution of illicit drugs the local designated police officer must be contacted in order for a collaborative approach with the wellbeing of the young person being the priority. Schools will work collaboratively with Victoria Police to ensure appropriate action is taken in response to drug related incidents including those involving illicit drugs.

It is recommended that the school also consult MACS for advice." - Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - February 2009.

St Aloysius College prohibits the possession, use, distribution or selling of illicit drugs and cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) on school premises or at any function or activity organised by the school (including camps, excursions and overseas trips). In responding to drug related issues, the College will liaise with the student, their family and relevant agencies to offer support and professional advice.

8. Procedures for Dealing with Student Wrongful Behaviour of a Serious Nature

The following processes have been informed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) recommendations for dealing with student wrongful behaviour of a serious nature.

Student wrongful behaviour of a serious nature is activity or behaviour of a student which:

- seriously undermines the ethos of the Catholic school; and/or
- consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any lawful order of a principal or teacher; and/or
- is offensive or dangerous to the physical or emotional health of any student or staff member; and/or
- consistently and deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities of other students.

Some wrongful behaviours of a serious nature are, by definition, criminal offences. These may include criminal damage of property, possession of a weapon, theft, assault, assault with weapons, use, possession or distribution of drugs, sexual assault. This list is indicative only and not all-inclusive. When a Principal determines that a serious offence of a criminal nature has occurred, the welfare needs of the offending student(s) is paramount. The incident should be reported to the police at the earliest opportunity.

When it is judged by the College that a student has engaged in wrongful behaviour of a serious nature within the school community a Behaviour Management Support Group will be convened to:

- consider the behaviour of the student and the implications for the student and the school community
- consider the personal and social needs of the student when determining how they may best be responded to, taking into account cultural and linguistic background, disability or other vulnerability and/or sensitivity.
- determine what behaviour management action within the school's stated processes is most appropriate
- identify strategies to assist the student, following successful behaviour management, to re-establish his/her place satisfactorily in the school community

- ensure that decisions of the Behaviour Management Support Group are implemented
- access any relevant agencies to provide support.

In arriving at decisions, the Behaviour Management Support Group aims for consensus. Where this is not achievable, the Principal (or Principal's nominee) makes the decision, in accordance with school policies and directives. The decision of the Behaviour Management Support Group is recorded in writing and filed in the school records. Confidentiality should be honored at all times.

The Behaviour Management Support Group will be comprised of:

- the Principal or/her nominee as convener and chairperson
- the Assistant Principal - Student Engagement and Wellbeing
- the student, who may be accompanied by a support person (not acting for fee or reward) nominated by the student
- the parent/carer(s) of the student, who may be accompanied by a support person (not acting for fee or reward) nominated by the parent/carer(s)
- the Year Level Leader
- a specialist person (as required) who may be of assistance, for example, the College Psychologist

In some instances, where the behaviour of a student is deemed to threaten immediate or ongoing harm, distress, or danger to others, it may be necessary to withdraw or suspend the student temporarily from the student community, pending a meeting of the Behaviour Management Support Group. Responsibility for such a decision rests with the Principal or the Principal's nominee.

8.1 In-School Withdrawal

Withdrawal from class and/or other school activities, if judged necessary as a behaviour management process. Withdrawal from some aspect(s) of the school program, will be structured positively to assist in the student's return to acceptable behaviours. This may involve the provision of time, in an appropriate and supervised setting, for the student to reflect upon their behaviours and attitudes, the impact of these on themselves and others, reasons for preferring acceptable behaviours, and ways to find encouragement and assistance to achieve this goal.

8.2 Out-of-school Suspension

If out-of-school suspension is judged appropriate by the Principal, this will be imposed for the shortest time necessary. At least one day prior to the day on which the suspension is to commence, the College will notify the student's parent/carer(s), if possible, by verbal communication initially and by confirmation in writing. The communication will include the reason for the suspension, the purpose of the suspension, and the date(s) on which the suspension will occur. The Principal must ensure the suspension is recorded in the school's files and in the Register for Suspension and Expulsion.

Where possible the parent/carer(s) are offered the opportunity to participate in a meeting to consider these and other related matters, including:

- the legal and pastoral responsibilities of the parent/carer(s) during the time of suspension
- the school's responsibility for providing learning material during the time of suspension
- the process of settling back into the school environment, and how this is to be facilitated
- arrangements for monitoring the student's progress following their return to school.

If an initial verbal contact with the parent/carer(s) is not possible, it may be necessary to ask the student to take the written notice home to them as their first notification. This decision rests with the College, taking into account the age of the student, legal requirements, duty of care, and other relevant circumstances. St Aloysius College expects that a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than nine school days in any one school year.

8.3 Negotiated Transfer

Negotiated Transfers involve a change of school by a student either between Catholic schools, or to a school within another sector, or to an alternative educational setting. In the case of students who are of post-compulsory school age, a wider range of options might be considered, for example, a negotiated transfer, either temporary or permanent, to the workforce, or to a higher education or training institute.

A Negotiated Transfer is an option in circumstances in which it is judged that St Aloysius College is not the right environment for the student, and that another setting would more suitably meet the student's current and future needs and be the most appropriate means of providing for the student's wellbeing. It may also be that, due to serious behavioural issues, a student's Negotiated Transfer is an appropriate means of providing for the wellbeing of the school community.

When a Negotiated Transfer is being offered, the Principal (or Principal's nominee) will provide comprehensive advice to the student and the student's parent/carer(s) about the benefits this option would provide and seek their agreement for a Negotiated Transfer.

Responsibility for negotiating a transfer is with the Principal (or Principal's nominee) of the school from which the student is to transfer. Sharing of relevant information under the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework may be required for the benefit of the student. The following matters will be considered:

- the environment which would best provide for the student's emotional, social and spiritual needs
- the school which would provide an educational program suitable to the student's needs, abilities and aspirations
- the process by which the transfer is to be negotiated
- the support required by the student and parent/carer(s) in making the transition.

8.4 Expulsion

St Aloysius College's position on expulsion is consistent with most Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne in that expulsion of a student will not occur except in the most serious of circumstances, and when the following conditions all apply:

- the student has engaged in wrongful behaviour of a serious nature (see definition above),
- the school's other processes for addressing such behaviours have been applied and not been successful, and
- the welfare and safety of others in the school community, or the need to maintain order and protect the rights of others, make it necessary that the student no longer be present in that school community.

Only the Principal has the authority to expel a student. Prior to confirming an expulsion, the Principal will:

- contact Mercy Education Limited to confirm that all protocols have been followed and inform MEL of the intended expulsion

- explain clearly to the student and the student's parent/carer(s) the reason(s) for the intended expulsion, and provide them with an opportunity to speak on behalf of the student
- follow the required endorsement processes outlined in Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) Expulsion of Student Policy, which includes consulting with MACS Regional Office.

The Principal must ensure that the expulsion is formally recorded in the school's files, the student's file and the Register for Suspension and Expulsion and provide to the parent/carer(s) of the expelled student a formal Notice of Expulsion. When possible, this notice is to be issued before or on the day the expulsion is to commence, and if that is not possible then as soon after that as possible. This notice needs to include:

- The reason(s) for the expulsion
- The commencement date of the expulsion – Student Clearance Procedure to be applied
- Details of the Review and/or Appeal processes available, if relevant

* *Natural justice must apply, and consequently St Aloysius College has a process by which the parent/carer(s) of an expelled student, and in some circumstances the expelled student himself/herself, may have the expulsion decision reviewed and/or appealed.

8.4.1 Process for Appealing the Expulsion Decision

A student and their family/parent/carer(s)/relevant persons should contact the designated MACS Regional General Manager for further advice regarding lodging an appeal against the expulsion decision and the procedure to be followed.

A student and/or their family/parent/carer(s)/relevant persons may appeal a Principal's decision to expel the student to the designated MACS Regional General Manager on the following grounds:

- a) there have not been sufficient interventions and strategies utilised prior to the decision to expel where the student has a history of behavioural issues
- b) the grounds on which the student has been expelled are unfair
- c) the expulsion process was not followed by the Principal
- d) other extenuating circumstances.

The *Expulsion of Students Appeal Information and Form* must be received by the designated MACS Regional General Manager within 10 business days of the student and their parents/guardians/carers/relevant person receiving the *Notice of Expulsion of Students*.

9. Mature Minor

St Aloysius College recognises that parents and carers are significant and essential partners with schools in actively supporting and nurturing the educational and wellbeing outcomes of children and young people from early years through to adolescence. For this reason, schools continue to engage parents/carers in schooling matters even after the student has turned 18 and are legally recognised as adults.

Notwithstanding this, a student under the age of 18 may ask to make a decision instead of their parent or carer. Principals, relevant staff, or others working with the student in the school can decide that the student is capable of making their own decision, noting that a student can be considered capable of making some decisions but not others.

In such scenarios, those making the assessment will consider the circumstances on a case-by-case basis and be satisfied that the young person has sufficient maturity, understanding and intelligence to comprehend the nature and effect of a particular decision. In some cases, the Principal may need to seek advice prior to determining whether a student is a mature minor. Any applicable parenting orders made under the Family Law Act 1975 (Cth.) must be considered in assessing mature minor status.

Where a mature minor is facing serious disciplinary measures such as suspension or expulsion, it is important that the student has a suitable, or relevant, person to support and advocate for them throughout the process, such as an:

- adult nominated by the student (refer to the procedures outlined in the ministerial order relating to Suspension and Expulsion).
- adult appointed from the suitable persons list in accordance with the procedures outlined in the ministerial order and this guidance.

Refer to CECV's Guidelines for dealing with Mature Minors (under development).

10. Restraint and Seclusion

St Aloysius College will undertake actions to prevent the need for the use of restraint or seclusion in accord with the CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines 2018.

In alignment with the CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines 2018:

Physical restraint is defined as the use of force to prevent, restrict, or subdue the movement of a student's body or part of their body where the student is not free to move away. Restraint does not include protective physical interventions, which involve physical contact to block, deflect or redirect a student's actions, or disengage from a student's grip.

Seclusion is the solitary confinement of a person in a room or area from which their exit is prevented by a barrier or another person. Seclusion includes situations where a person is left alone in a room or area and reasonably believes they cannot leave that room or area even if they may physically be able to (e.g. the door is not locked). In extreme circumstances, such as in response to behaviours that cause harm to self or others, teachers will respond by exiting the other students from the learning space to ensure their safety. Where the student continues to display threatening and dangerous behaviour (e.g. wielding a bat), staff will seek to limit harm to others by isolating the student for the minimum amount of time required for the student to calm. Seclusion does not include the use of a safe place, time out or chill out rooms, being conditions that are set up to support the student and often included in Behaviour Support Plans.

If a student is placed in a separate room as a means of seclusion, staff will maintain appropriate supervision of the student.

Whilst St Aloysius College acknowledges that prevention is the best strategy, there are limited circumstances in which restraint or seclusion may be deemed appropriate. In making a decision to implement any form of restraint or seclusion, St Aloysius College staff are aware that their actions may directly increase the risk of injury and trauma, both for the student and for the staff member themselves. Such decisions are usually required to be made in times of high stress. Actions that may be considered reasonable will be made by staff present and will depend on the individual circumstances of each case as a matter of professional judgment.

The use of restraint or seclusion does not form part of any of the College's approach to behaviour management. Restraint and seclusion will only be used in limited emergency situations, as outlined below.

1. The student's behaviour poses an imminent threat of physical harm or danger.
2. The action is reasonable in all the circumstances.
3. There is no less restrictive means of responding in the circumstances.

In the event that restraint or seclusion is used, the least restrictive form of restraint/seclusion will be used for the minimum time possible. The restraint/seclusion will cease as soon as the immediate danger for the student or others is averted.

The clear priority when managing such an incident will be the safety of all concerned. St Aloysius College staff involved in an incident of restraint or seclusion will immediately notify the Principal and provide for the immediate care and safety of those concerned. The student's parent/carer(s) will be contacted. A post-incident evaluation and report will be completed in accord with the templates and processes outlined in the CECV Positive Behaviour Guidelines 2018.

11. Transparency and Voice

In the event that parent/carer/relevant person require a support person in order to participate fully in the suspension, negotiated transfer or expulsion process, a suitable person may be involved, e.g. a member of a Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, an interagency support worker, staff from Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) or Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI). Organising a support person is the responsibility of the student or parent/carer/relevant person.

The Principal will ensure that records are made and retained of any action taken in relation to behaviour support or interventions put in place for the student and, if deemed necessary, the implementation of suspension, negotiated transfer or expulsion processes. In determining whether a student's behaviour is serious enough to warrant suspension, negotiated transfer or expulsion, the Principal will consider the safety, care and wellbeing of the student, staff, and other students. The Principal will notify Mercy Education Ltd. In such circumstances, the interests of the students will be balanced against the duty of care to, and the rights of, all members of the school community, and the legal obligations to, as far as reasonably practicable, provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risk to health. Where requested, the school will assist the parent/carer/relevant person to access counselling for the student.

12. Vulnerable students and families

St Aloysius College considers the special provisions that may apply where vulnerable students and families are concerned, prior to determining whether to instigate processes associated with suspension, negotiated transfer or expulsion. These may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; students with disability; students from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds; students in out-of-home care and students with mental health concerns. Parents can access this policy from the College's website.

Appendix 1: Resources

Bully Stoppers – a resource containing information and advice for the school community, including students, parents and school staff.

Bullying. No Way! – a website for Australian schools, managed by the Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group (SSSC) which has representatives from all states and territories, including the Catholic and independent schooling sectors.

eSmart – assists schools to develop a culture that promotes the safe, smart and responsible use of technology.

eSafety Commissioner – provides a range of up-to-date information and resources, coupled with a complaints system to assist children who experience serious cyberbullying and image-based abuse.

Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (2018)

Student Wellbeing Hub

Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA). (2018). Positive Behaviour Guidelines

Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA). Child Safety Commitment Statement

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools. (2018). eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities

Catholic Education Melbourne. (2017). Horizons of Hope: Vision and Context

Catholic Education Melbourne. (2017). Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing

Date Ratified: February 2017

Approved by: Advisory Council

Implementation Responsibility: Assistant Principal - Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Reviewed: July 2019; March 2021; April 2022; July 2023; July 2024

Date of Last Review: February 2025

Date of Next Review: December 2026