CASTLEMAINE SECONDARY COLLEGE
Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
2014

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Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to document Castlemaine Secondary College's approach to student engagement and positive student well-being, and to inform all members of the school community of the College's engagement and well-being goals and strategies. This policy has been written in accordance with the Student Engagement Policy Guidelines published by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). As the DEECD guidelines recommend, this policy consists of the following five sections:

1. A "School Profile Statement" describing the College, with a specific emphasis on its well-being structures and personnel for the current school year.
2. A "Whole School Prevention Statement", which outlines how the College's vision, goals, structures and programs aim to prevent students from becoming disengaged with school.
3. A "Rights and Responsibilities" section, which explains the rights and responsibilities of all staff, students and parents.
4. A "Shared Expectations" section, which documents the commonly held beliefs about student engagement and well-being across the College.
5. A "School Actions and Consequences" section, which explains the actions the College will take to reinforce positive student behaviours and to respond to inappropriate student behaviours.

The three appendices to this policy provide more specific information relating to:

 1. The specific roles and names of the key well-being personnel in the College.

2. Specific programs and strategies used by the College to promote positive well-being and engagement.

3. The College's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

These appendices can be accessed via electronic links at appropriate points in the main sections of the Policy.

1. School Profile Statement

The College

Castlemaine Secondary College is a multi-campus college for students in Years 7-12, although the future will probably be a single campus college. The College embraces its role as the only government secondary college in the Mount Alexander Shire, which is a diverse community of approximately 20,000 people. The diversity of our community is valued by the College, and this is particularly reflected in the range of pathways options that are provided for our students, including VCE, VCAL, VET and Steiner courses.

Wellbeing and Engagement Support Personnel at the College

Below is an outline of the main wellbeing support personnel at the College. Please press "control" key and click on the links to find out more details about each service and the names of the people currently filling these roles.

- ► <u>Staff Mentors</u> – Each student at the College belongs to a Mentor Group comprising 10-15 students. The Stafff Mentors who lead these groups are the primary points of contact at the College for students and their parents.
- ► <u>Team Leaders</u> – Each Leading Teacher and Assistant Principal supports and advises a team of 4-6 Mentors.
- ► <u>An Assistant Principal responsible for leading the Engagement and Well-Being Team.</u>
- ► <u>Guidance Counsellor (Etty Street Campus).</u>
- ► <u>School Chaplain (Blakeley Road Campus)</u>
- ► <u>Blakeley Road Learning Centre Co-ordinator</u>
- ► <u>Careers Advisor</u>
- ► <u>Integration Coordinator</u>
- ► <u>Department of Education Psychologists</u>
- ► <u>Other External Supports</u>

Blakeley Road Campus

The Blakeley Road Campus caters for students from Years 7 to 9 and operates under a pastoral care system based on small Mentor Groups of 10-15 students led by one Staff Mentor. The Mentor Group teacher is responsible for building and maintaining positive relationships with students and parents. Students entering the College will also join a class group with other students who share some similar interests and possibly similar learning styles. In Years 7 and 8, students study a core curriculum under the care and guidance of a small number of teachers, including their Mentor. Year 9 students also belong to small Mentor Groups and study several core subjects, as well as a range of electives which allow the students to begin exploring subject choices they would like to pursue in their senior secondary years.

The pastoral care structures and curriculum at the Blakeley Road Campus are designed to assist students to develop a close connection with school and make a smooth transition from primary school and towards their senior secondary studies at the Etty Street Campus.

Etty Street Campus

The Etty Street Campus caters for students from Years 10 to 12, and a Year 9 Steiner class. There is a strong focus on multiple learning options and pathways for students on the Etty Street Campus. Year 10 classes include mainstream classes based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS), and a Year 10 Steiner class. Year 10 students also have the opportunity to begin studying VCE and VET subjects.

Years 11 and 12 students are able to select from a broad range of VET, VCAL, & VCE courses, so as to provide alternative pathways beyond secondary school. To improve connectedness, wellbeing and attendance at the Etty Street Campus, each student belongs to a small a Mentor Group (10- 15 students) or a Steiner Class. The Mentors meet with their students once per day, including an extended 30 minute session each Wednesday. In the weekly extended sessions, the Mentor Groups focus on course selection counselling, community service projects and other activities aimed at enhancing the students' sense of wellbeing and connection to the College and community.

2. Whole-School Prevention Statement

Vision

Wellbeing and engagement are integral to the College's vision. Our vision is:

'Staff students and parents of Castlemaine Secondary College are resilient, responsible, creative and engaged in our local and global community. We are independent learners striving to reach our potential.'

The College promotes a healthy, supportive and safe environment, with a special focus on the development of positive relationships. Wellbeing is seen as a shared responsibility between school, home and the community.

Reflection on the data collected from the annual staff and parent opinion surveys and student Attitudes to School survey informs our annual wellbeing and engagement objectives as articulated in the College's Annual Implementation Plan.

Goals

Constructively challenge and raise the expectations and achievements of all students

Creating a positive school culture
► Celebrate effort, achievement and success
► Further develop a positive whole school culture and identity

Building a safe and supportive school environment
► Create an environment where students feel secure and have a sense of belonging
► Use Restorative Practices to promote student well-being

Promoting pro-social values and behaviours
► Have a culture of healthy choices, problem solving and pro-social behaviours
► Students develop their emotional intelligence and respect difference
► The college community demonstrates positive, supportive and respectful relationships

Encouraging student participation
► Student voice is heard in school consultation and decision making
► Student leadership opportunities take place across all year levels
► Students are actively involved in shaping their own learning

Proactively engaging with parents and carers
► Convey a welcoming culture for parents, carers and families
► Encourage parents and carers to be partners in learning and support their children's learning

Responding to individual students
► Recognise and cater for the needs of individual students
► Maintain and further develop effective student support structures

Linking to the local community
► Build partnerships with the local community with 'Enterprise Learning' being a cultural feature of the College
► Develop active mentoring programs

Press "control" key and click here to read about current programs, structures and strategies used by the College to promote positive student well-being and engagement.

3.   Rights, responsibilities and expectations

Every member of the school community has a right to participate fully in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. These principles are enshrined in Equal Opportunity legislation and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Students have the right to
► be in an **environment** that encourages learning;
► a **learning program** that meets their individual needs, where they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition and to receive assistance when needed;
► feel **safe** at all times;
► **know the class rules and school expectations**, and the consequences of inappropriate behavior;
► be **valued as a person** and be treated fairly without discrimination on the basis of culture, race or gender;
► have the opportunity to reasonably express a point of view and be heard;
► participate in the decision-making at the College.

Students have a responsibility and are expected to
► **attend regularly** and **participate fully** in the school's educational program;
► work to achieve their best and **develop as an individual learner** and increase their own learning by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals;
► participate in the development of **class rules;**
► be polite, listen with consideration and **act in a considerate and responsible** manner ensuring they do not interfere in the learning of others;
► demonstrate **respect for the rights of others**, their property, and not take part in harassment or 'put downs';
► **look after the College** grounds and buildings.

Staff have the right to
► work in an **orderly and co-operative environment**;
► receive **respect and support** from the school community;
► **be informed**, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student;
► respect for their **professional views**/opinions/contributions.

Teachers have a responsibility to
► fairly, reasonably and consistently, **implement the Student Engagement Policy**;
► provide and **maintain a safe, supportive and healthy learning environment** for students;
► develop with students a **classroom management plan** including set of class rules and the consequences of inappropriate behavior;
► **know their students**, know how students learn and how to teach them effectively;
► set **high but achievable expectations** of students;
► provide **quality programs of instruction** in accordance with department guidelines and school policy, and plan and assess for effective learning;
► use a range of teaching strategies and resources to **engage students** in effective learning that assists students to become independent and lifelong learners;
► participate in **regular communication with parents** about student welfare and educational progress.

Parents and carers have the right to
► **know that their children are in a safe, happy learning environment** where they are treated fairly and with respect;

► **have proper consideration and feedback** on action taken in response to complaints, concerns or enquiries;
► **regular communication** from staff about their child's welfare and educational progress.

Parents and carers have a responsibility to

► **support the College's Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy;**
► take an **active interest in their child's education** and model positive behaviours;
► engage in regular **communication** with staff regarding their child's learning;
► **support the college** in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment;
► **ensure their child's regular attendance**; that they arrive on time equipped and ready to learn and to advise the College as soon as possible if their son or daughter will not be attending and providing written notification of reasons for absences;
► provide **current contact details** and advise the school of particular or changed circumstances that might affect their son or daughter's progress or wellbeing.

Students with disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992.* The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

4   Shared Expectations

The Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy aims to establish predictable, fair, safe and democratic classrooms and school environments.

At Castlemaine Secondary College we operate according to the values of **Pride, Respect** and **Responsibility.** These shared values were established through a community consultation process in 2006.

Pride

Members of the College community will take pride in our College and the diversity of our community. We will be respectful of each other and take pride in the various individual differences (including differences arising from race, gender, culture and religion) that help to make us a diverse school community.

► Our classrooms are places where we actively participate and strive for personal best.
► The way we behave shows we are proud of our school.
► We strive for excellence and try our personal best in everything we do.

Respect

Members of the College community take pride in their learning, behaviour, and learning environment

► We treat others as we would like to be treated.
► We work, learn and participate in an environment of mutual respect.
► We value individual and collective diversity
► We play and work safely at all times.

Responsibility

Members of the College community take responsibility for their actions, behaviour and attitudes towards others; for the learning of ourselves and others; and for the physical resources that support the learning environment.

► We take responsibility for our own behaviour and understand the logical consequences that follow.
► We are responsible for our learning**.**
► We will endeavour to be self-motivated learners.
► We take care of our own and others' personal property and space.

Table of College Expectations

Expectations	Explanation of Expectations
Co-operative Behaviour Students are to follow reasonable and lawful instructions from staff.	Students should follow reasonable and lawful instructions without dispute. Refusal to follow reasonable and lawful instructions or disciplinary consequences is uncooperative behaviour. 'Tone' and attitude to others should be reasonable and cooperative. Swearing or verbal abuse should not occur.
Punctuality and Attendance Students must attend classes on time. Students are to remain within the permitted areas of the school grounds unless appropriate permission is gained	Staff and students should be punctual to all classes. All students who arrive late to school or leave early should sign in /out at the General Office. Students are to remain within the permitted areas of Castlemaine Secondary College grounds and buildings during the school day, including recess and lunchtime. Year 12 students may leave the campus when not required at a timetabled class or designated activity.
Care of Property All members of the College community are to respect both college and private property	Private property of both students and staff should not be interfered with. Damage to College or personal property should be reported immediately. It is reasonable to expect that damage caused is made good. **Note: Personal items are brought to school at a student's own risk**.
Anti-social or dangerous actions Actions which are anti-social or dangerous are prohibited	All members of the College community are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and acceptable manner. The following behaviours are indicative of those not permitted: ► Unacceptable physical contact (tackling, punching, kicking, spitting, etc) ► Throwing objects in a dangerous manner ► Possession of weapons (including sharp instruments) or aerosol cans.

Harassment/Bullying Harassment and bullying are unacceptable behaviours.	All members of our school community respect each other. Harassment and bullying are not acceptable in any form including: verbal, social, physical, psychological, sexual and cyber bullying and harassment. Offensive phone calls or messages also constitute harassment. Staff and students are expected to use non-offensive language (language based on gender, race etc may also be harassment). All members of the College community are required to read and abide by the College's **Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy**, which be accessed by clicking here.
Electronic equipment and other items for personal use Items which might disrupt learning are not to be used** during class, assemblies and other college activities, except with express permission of the teacher for a valid educational reason. Such items include mobile phones, MP3 players and electronic games (**This includes: sending or receiving text messages, phone calls, photographs, sending data).	The College may ban an item. For example, in the event of the item being used in bullying, inappropriate behaviour, stealing, vandalism or disruption of learning. Items often used inappropriately include: skateboards, electronic games, MP3 players and mobile phones. Expectations relating to mobile phone use: ► The appropriateness of mobile phone use during off campus activities varies with the activity. If mobile phone use is prejudicial to the conduct of the event the teacher in charge should clearly communicate this to students and/or parents. Note: where students are not under direct teacher supervision a mobile phone can be an essential means of contact. ► Mobile phones may not be used in a manner that transgresses privacy issues. ► Non co-operative behaviour in relation to mobile phone use is 'not following a reasonable instruction from the teacher'. ► Confiscation of mobile phones may occur for serious issues (for example to prevent harassment). In such cases the issue should be discussed with parents/guardians. Conditions may be placed on the student's mobile phone privileges.
Uniform & Appropriate Dress Students are to conform with the uniform policy/dress code	Blakeley Road Campus students (Years 7-9) are expected to wear correct school uniform as outlined in the **uniform policy.** Etty Street Campus students (Years 10-12 and Year 9 Steiner) are expected to wear appropriate clothing as outlined in the **dress code.** The relevant Uniform Policy/Dress Codes will be printed in the Student Organiser.
Illicit substances The use of, or possession of, illicit substances is prohibited	Drugs (except those prescribed by a doctor) are not permitted on the College grounds. The use of or being under the influence of illicit drugs at school or at a school event is not permitted. Alcohol and cigarettes are not permitted

5.   School actions and consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices. Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response to encourage engagement. While Restorative Practices are the College's preferred approach to address inappropriate behaviours, the College also reserves the right to implement disciplinary actions such as detentions, suspensions and expulsions as a part of the restorative process.

College actions used to celebrate student achievements

Student achievements and positive behaviours are recognized by the College in a variety of ways including:

- ► Regular feedback from staff.
- ► Acknowledgement of students' efforts and achievements through school reports and parent-teacher interviews.
- ► Recognition at school assemblies.
- ► Recognition in the College newsletter.
- ► Regular media releases to the *Castlemaine Mail.*
- ► School prizes at Awards Night.
- ► Principals' Awards
- ► Principal meetings with students to celebrate positive behaviour and student achievements

Actions and consequences for inappropriate behaviour

Restorative Practices

College staff members are required to use restorative practices when responding to inappropriate student behaviour. Restorative practices move the focus away from a punitive consequence that is based on the establishment of wrong doing. Rather, it seeks to value and support those involved, so they feel empowered to take positive action to address the situation and move forward. Restorative practice is about being respectful of every member of our school community, encouraging responsible behaviour and actions, ensuring that personal pride and dignity are maintained. Restorative Practices:

- ► are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness *(Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)*
- ► promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy *(Hopkins 2002)*
- ► involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- ► promote relationship management rather than behaviour management *(Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)*
- ► separate the deed from the doer *(Marshall et al. 2002)*
- ► are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied *(Morrison 2002).*
- ► A 'no blame' approach is encouraged through the sharing of personal perspectives.

A restorative question approach is to ask:

When things go wrong	When someone has been hurt
► What happened?	► What did you think when you realized what had happened?
► What were you thinking at the time?	► What impact has this incident had on you and others?
► What have you thought about since?	
► Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?	► What has been the hardest thing for you?
► What do you think you need to do to make things right?	► What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

The restorative process requires a response 'that makes things right' in relation to those who have been affected. Any imposed consequence should reflect this approach.

Other actions and consequences

At times, other actions and disciplinary sanctions may be imposed in conjunction with a restorative response to student misbehaviour. Such consequences include:

- Detentions.
- Yard duty.
- Student contracts.
- Individual Education Plans.
- Support group meeting involving the student, parent or guardian and teachers.
- In school suspensions.
- Out of school suspensions
- Expulsion.

The College will abide by the DEECD procedures for suspensions and expulsions if these disciplinary measures need to be taken. Full details of these procedures can be found in the DEECD Student Engagement Policy Guidelines at:

http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf

Appendix One – Explanation of Wellbeing Support Personnel Roles

What is the Mentor's role?

Each student at Castlemaine Secondary College belongs to a Mentor Group consisting of 10-15 students. The Mentor Groups meet for 10 minutes at the start of each day, except for Wednesday when there is an extended (30minute) Mentor Group session. The Mentor Groups have deliberately been kept to small numbers to help provide a more personalized approach to supporting students.

It is the Mentor's responsibility to 'connect' with the students in his or her Mentor Group. The Mentor should be the adult who knows the student best and is the prime caring adult for that student at school. Each Mentor aims to develop harmonious group dynamics, a good work ethic, and an atmosphere of concern and care amongst the students in the Mentor Group. The Mentor also encourages interest and discussion about upcoming events, and participation in sports, the Student Representative Council (SRC), and special projects.

The Mentor should be the primary link between home and school. Parents and guardians are urged to contact their child's Mentor in the first instance when they have any concerns.

*Press "Control" and click here to return to the Wellbeing Support Personnel section of Engagement Policy, **or** read on to find out more about the role of Team Leaders and details of who the Mentors and Team Leaders are in 2012..*

Mentor Group Team Leaders

Each Leading Teacher and Assistant Principal (Team Leader) has a responsibility for supporting a team of 3-6 Mentors in their work. These Team Leaders will communicate with and meet regularly with each Mentor in their team.

*Press "Control" and click here to return to the Wellbeing Support Personnel section of Engagement Policy, **or** read on to find out more about the role of Team Leaders and details of who the Mentors and Team Leaders are in 2012..*

Assistant Principal - Student Engagement and Wellbeing

The College Principal (Mary McPherson) is supported by two Assistant Principals with responsibilities across the whole College. These Assistant Principals roles are:

- Acting Assistant Principal for Student Learning (**Peter Bovell**)
- Assistant Principal for Student Engagement and Wellbeing (**Paul Frye**)

The Assistant Principal for Student Engagement and Wellbeing is responsible for the implementation of this Student Engagement Policy and for overseeing the Engagement and Wellbeing programs throughout the College.

Press "Control" and click here to return to the Wellbeing Support Personnel section of Engagement Policy,

Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor, Melissa Laragy-Walker, provides specialized wellbeing support for students, parents and staff at the Etty Street Campus.

Students are able to self-refer to the Guidance Counsellor, and all staff may also refer students to these people. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact Melissa with any student wellbeing concerns they might have.

Chaplain

The Chaplain, Lisa Cochrane, provides specialized wellbeing support for students, parents and staff at the Blakeley Road Campus.

The Chaplain at our school is funded through the Australian Government's National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program and a local Chaplaincy Committee. Chaplaincy is a unique service that is of great value to our students, staff and parents, offering care, building the social skills of students, and encouraging responsible behaviour amongst our young people. Our Chaplain works as an integral part of our Wellbeing Team. Together they offer individual support, they plan and implement wellbeing programs across the curriculum and they participate in a broad range of school coordinated activities such as school excursions, camps, sporting events and assemblies. Student engagement in the Chaplaincy service is of a voluntary nature.

Each year our school council seeks feedback from our school community in order to enable us to review and confirm support for the Program. We also maintain a risk management plan which is reviewed annually. School procedures are followed for parents and students to seek referral, manage complaints and to opt out of the Program.

School Nurse

The School Nurse's role is to reduce risks to young people and promote better health in the school community through health promotion activities and individual health counselling for students.

Our School Nurse, **Tara Gilbee**, works at the College every Thursday and Friday. The Secondary School Nursing Program is aimed at lower to middle secondary students, which means that Tara is based in the Nurse's Office at the Blakeley Road Campus. However, Tara is available to provide health related advice to parents of all students.

Blakeley Road Learning Centre

Co-ordinated by **Andrea McDonald** and located in the Blakeley Road Library, the Learning Centre provides individual and small group support to Blakeley Road students when they require special assistance with their learning. The Learning Centre teachers are able to assist students who have fallen behind with their work or are finding it difficult to learn specific skills or concepts at the same pace as other students. Other forms of support provided through the Learning Centre include assistance with developing organizational habits, study skills and homework routines, and provision of extension learning activities for high achieving students. Students can be referred to the Learning Centre for assistance by their teachers or parents, or they can also discuss directly with Andrea McDonald the process of gaining Learning Centre assistance.

Careers Advisor

The College's Careers Advisor is **Ian Cook**, who is based at the Etty Street Campus. Ian is also available to provide careers advice to Blakeley Road students.

Press "Control" key and click here to return to the Wellbeing Support Personnel section of Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

Integration Co-ordinator

Students who qualify for assistance through the Department of Education's Program for Students with a Disability are supported by the Integration Co-ordinator, **Caroline Cook**, and her team of integration aides.

Press "Control" key and click here to return to the Wellbeing Support Personnel section of Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

Department of Education and Childhood Development Psychologists

Stephen Cumming and **Jodie McQualter** (Psychologists) are members of the District School Support Team which services the College and other district schools. These DEECD psychologists specializes in educational assessments and provide their services through a referral process which staff and parents can initiate through **Paul Frye** (Assistant Principal – Student Engagement and Wellbeing). At times, there will be a waiting list for students to access these services.

The District School Support Team also plays an important role in helping the school to respond after critical incidents (e.g. debriefing services to staff and students). Please let Paul Frye know if you are aware of any critical incidents which might require the support of the District Support Team's critical response service.

Press "Control" key and click here to return to the Wellbeing Support Personnel section of Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

External Supports

In addition to the College and DEECD supports outlined above, there are also numerous health and wellbeing supports in the community which the College is able to help students and parents access. For example, doctors and counselling appointments are made available to CSC students through CHIRP, and the Guidance Counsellor and School Nurse can help students to access these appointments. The College also works closely with the Youth Connections Worker (based at CHIRP), who supports students who are at risk of not finishing school. Students can be referred to the Youth Connections Worker through the Guidance Counsellor or Chaplain.

Press "Control" key and click here to return to the College Expectations section of Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

Appendix Two: Current programs, strategies and structures aimed at promoting engagement and well-being

► Broad range of learning pathways options, including VCE, VET, VCAL and Steiner classes, and extra-curricular offerings (e.g. sport, music, camps, chess and public speaking).

► Flexible Learning Options (FLO) Program for Years 8 and 9 students who are finding it difficult to engage with the traditional curriculum.

► School structures aimed at providing smaller student groups within the larger school community. These include the Mentor Groups to which every student belongs.

► Strong community partnerships.

► Provision of Managed Individual Pathways Plans and Individual Education Plans for students requiring extra support and guidance.

► Blakeley Road Community Mentoring program. Community members, who are trained through the Mt Alexander Shire Mentoring Program, mentor selected students each week.

► Blakeley Road Learning Centre. Students requiring extra support with their studies are able to seek assistance from the Learning Centre staff.

► Cyber Safety Education through Mentor Groups. CSC is currently working the through the process to become accredited as an e-Smart school (www.esmartschools.org.au) .

► Strong focus on staff professional learning through Professional Learning Teams which regularly.

► Use of the Federal Government's *Mind Matters* program to guide strategic planning and to access staff professional development aimed at promoting positive mental health for secondary school aged young people. In 2011 CSC earned accreditation as a Mind Matters school.

► Anti-Bullying and Harassment policy – see Appendix Two

► Access to the DEECD Student Support Services including psychologists and speech pathologists.

► Close partnership with Castlemaine District Community (also known as CHIRP) and provision of several student wellbeing programs through this agency.

► Partnership with Youth Connect worker to assist students who have become disengaged from school, or are at risk of doing so.

► Re-engagement support group meetings for students who have become disconnected from school. These support group meetings focus on establishing graduated return to school processes.

► Violence prevention strategies through staff participation in the Solving the Jigsaw professional development modules.

    Road Safe Victoria driver education.

Press "control" key and click here **to return to Section Two ("Whole School Prevention Statement") of Engagement and Well-being Policy.**

Appendix Three - CASTLEMAINE SECONDARY COLLEGE
ANTI BULLYING and HARASSMENT POLICY

CASTLEMAINE SECONDARY COLLEGE ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

Introduction

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at Castlemaine Secondary College. *Bullying and harassment occur when one or more people abuse the power that they have to hurt, embarrass or humiliate others. This hurtful behaviour is usually, but necessarily, repeated over time.*

When a person is bullied or harassed, they can be negatively affected by:

- feelings of anger, embarrassment, loss of self-confidence or humiliation;
- not wanting to come to school;
- becoming depressed;
- experiencing thoughts of self-harm or suicide;

Examples of behaviours that could constitute bullying and harassment are:

- threatening a person;
- working with a gang or group in order to frighten, embarrass or humiliate a person;
- hitting, punching, pushing or employing other unwanted aggressive physical contact against another person;
- hiding or destroying a person's property;
- making rude or unpleasant notes or drawings about another person;
- name calling or other put downs;
- racially offensive insults;
- deliberate and hurtful exclusion of others from groups;
- spreading rumours about another person or their family;
- "cyber" bullying (using Facebook, other social networking services, email, text messages etc to bully or harass).

Examples of what could constitute sexual harassment are:

- unwanted touching or brushing up against another person;
- calling another person rude names or making sexually suggestive comments or gestures;
- commenting on the size or shape of another's body;
- sexually oriented comments;
- comments about another's sexual preference or alleged sexual behaviours;
- displaying or passing on sexually graphic material.

Although much of this policy focuses on bullying and harassment that exists between students, it is acknowledged that bullying and harassment sometimes occurs between staff and students. There is advice later in this policy about processes for reporting examples of bullying and harassment between staff and students.

Preventative Approaches to Bullying and Harassment at CSC

The primary preventative approaches the College takes to minimize bullying and harassment are to:

- Create an environment where students are actively involved in a wide range of positive classroom and co-curricular activities which require students to work co-operatively and solve problems together.

- Insist that all staff members model respectful behaviours and positive strategies for resolving any conflicts that occur.

The College also strives to minimise bullying and harassment by developing students':

(1) <u>Knowledge</u> about bullying, its effects and how to respond as a victim or bystander to bullying

(2) Positive <u>Attitudes</u> e.g. being unprejudiced, empathetic and self-accepting

(3) <u>Skills</u> e.g. assertiveness and conflict resolution abilities

Examples of how this preventative education is achieved are: reminders to staff, students and parents about the contents of this policy every term; guest speakers and drama performances; activities in the weekly extended Mentor Group sessions; targeted small group programs co-ordinated by the Social Worker (e.g. "Go Boys, Go", "Go Girls, Go" and "Respect Yourself"); and exploration of themes such as prejudice and empathy in various other parts of the curriculum (e.g. English, Humanities and History).

Other ways that the College aims to prevent or minimize harassment at CSC include:

- Ongoing professional development for staff (e.g. since 2010, many CSC staff have attended anti-bullying professional development delivered by Solving the Jigsaw and Mind Matters, as well as training in Restorative Justice).

- An annual Student Bullying Survey which helps staff to understand and act upon information such as the areas of the school students feel most unsafe and the names of specific students who are repeatedly being reported as bullying others.

- Provision of a Social Worker (Blakeley Road Campus) and Guidance Counsellor (Etty Street Campus) during school hours five days per week.

- Accreditation as a Mind Matters (www.mindmatters.edu.au) and working towards accreditation as an eSmart (www.esmartschools.org.au) school.

Recommended responses for students when targeted by bullying and harassment

Depending on the circumstances of the bullying or harassment that has occurred, the following strategies can be helpful. However, it is <u>not</u> suggested that you have to follow these strategies in order (e.g. often it might be appropriate to go straight to Strategy D). Any of these four strategies can be used as a starting point for addressing the problem.

A. **Try to ignore the problem** – sometimes low-level bullying will stop if it is ignored. However, this approach is not recommended if: (a) the target of the bullying is particularly humiliated, upset or hurt; or (b) this tactic has been tried for some time, but the bullying has continued.

B. **Stick up for yourself assertively**. Tell the offender firmly but respectfully that their actions are unwanted and you expect them to stop.

C. **Discuss the problem with your parent, guardian or another trusted adult.**

C. **Approach a teacher or other staff member that you trust**. This may be your Mentor Teacher, another teacher, School Nurse, Chaplain or Social Worker (Blakeley Rd Campus) or Guidance Counsellor (Etty St Campus). The staff member will not talk to others about your problem or take any action without your permission (except in the case of child abuse or if they believe you are at serious risk of harm), although you will be given the option to lodge a formal bullying complaint. With your permission the staff member will enlist the support of a Leading Teacher, Social Worker, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain or Assistant Principal to:

- Speak with the accused person or people and investigate what has occurred.
- Take action to try to stop the bullying happening again and to repair any harm that has been done.
- Continue to monitor the situation to check whether the action taken has worked.

College Responses to Reports of Bullying and Harassment

Although there might be occasions when low-level examples of bullying and harassment can be addressed relatively quickly and informally by staff, those who report bullying must always be given the option of making a formal complaint. Reports of bullying and harassment must not be "fobbed off" by staff members who receive such complaints.

The process for dealing with formal complaints of bullying and harassment are as follows:

(1) The staff member receiving the complaint must make a written record of the report, or seek the support of the College Social Worker, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, a Leading Teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal to do so. The written record needs to contain specific details of what has occurred, where and when it occurred, who was involved and who witnessed what occurred.

(2) The written complaint must he passed on to one of the College Social Worker, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, a Leading Teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal, who will interview other people involved and witnesses. Such interviews must be conducted fairly and with an open mind.

(3) If bullying or harassment is deemed to have occurred, the investigating staff member must take action to address the problem. The action that the investigating staff member takes will depend on the circumstances and severity of the bullying that has occurred. Follow-up actions may include:

- Cautioning those involved
- Restorative conferences or mediation
- Counselling for those involved
- Disciplinary measures including detentions and suspensions

(4) Specific arrangements for following up regularly with the victim and perpetrator must be made and documented.

(4) The parents of the victim and perpetrator/s will be contacted unless there are exceptional circumstances approved by an Assistant Principal or the Principal for not doing so.

(5) The notes and follow-up actions relating to all formal bullying complaints must be forwarded to the Assistant Principal – Student Engagement and Wellbeing.

What if I'm not satisfied with how a formal complaint has been dealt with or I have a complaint involving a student and staff member?

If parents or students are not satisfied with how a formal complaint of bullying or harassment has been dealt with, they are urged to raise this concern with the Principal or one of the Assistant Principals, who must review the follow-up that has occurred.

If students wish to lodge complaints of bullying by staff, or staff wish to lodge complaints of bullying by students, they should also report their concerns directly to the Principal or an Assistant Principal.

If any student, parent of staff member wishes to make a complaint of bullying or harassment by the Principal, or has concerns about the manner in which the Principal has handled a bullying complaint, they are encouraged to contact the DEECD Regional Office in Bendigo to discuss their concern.

Advice to bystanders

Research about bullying tells us that (a) bullying almost always occurs in front of other student bystanders, and (b) the actions of these bystanders can have a very powerful influence on whether the bullying stops or gets worse.

Most students feel uncomfortable about witnessing bullying. Specific ways that bystanders are encouraged to respond when bullying occurs are:

1. **Not join in or offer any form of encouragement to the bullies** – being seen to offer any form of encouragement for the bullying behaviour will make the situation much worse for the target of the bullying.

2. **Directly support the victim** – e.g. assertively tell the bullies to stop or offer comfort to the victim.

3. **Report and seek help from a staff member.**

Specific advice to students and parents about responding to cyber bullying

Cyber-bullying is a particularly hurtful form of bullying because it can occur anywhere and at anytime. Offensive forms of electronic communication are able to be viewed and passed on to a wide audience of people. This material can also be later used against those who have produced or sent it (e.g. by the police or by future employees who might use your electronic trail to make judgements about you).

Those people who experience cyber-bullying are urged to:

1. Not respond to the offensive material.
2. Keep a copy of what has been sent.

3. Block the sender from making any further contact with you.
4. Report what has occurred to one or more of the following: (a) the administrators of the electronic space where the bullying has occurred (e.g. report abuse to Facebook); (b) the Police (if the messages are

particularly threatening or sexually explicit); (c) a trusted adult; (d) the Social Worker (Blakeley Rd Campus) or Guidance Counsellor (Etty St Campus).

Advice about bullying and harassment to parents and guardians

CSC values our relationship with the parents and guardians of our students. Specifically, we welcome suggestions about making the College a safer place for our students, as well as feedback about particular incidents of bullying. Through this policy, the web links at the end of the policy and various parent information evenings that we run, we aim to provide parents with detailed information about bullying.

Parents who wish to discuss specific bullying concerns with the College are encouraged to follow the advice (below) provided by one of Australia's foremost experts about bullying in schools - Ken Rigby (*Children and Bullying, How Parents and Educators Can Reduce Bullying at School*):

- **Make an appointment to discuss the concern** – specific people who can assist are: the Social Worker (Blakeley Rd Campus), Guidance Counsellor (Etty St Campus), the student's Mentor Teacher, the Chaplain or one of the Assistant Principals.

- **Gather the facts about what you believe has taken place** – Calmly present this information to the College and listen to any further information which might be presented during your meeting (quite often, each of the adults in a meeting such as this will only have part of the picture each).

- **Be firm, but refrain from angry threats or denouncing the school** – Often the College will be unaware of what has occurred. Working together calmly to address the problem is essential.

- **Recognize that the school may need time to investigate and respond to what has occurred** – Negotiate a reasonable timeline for action with the College.

- **Be prepared to work with the College to address the problem in a way that is consistent with this policy**.

- **Make sure that you develop with the school representative a clear understanding of how and when you will be informed of the follow-up that has occurred and how the situation will be monitored afterwards.**

- **Let the College know if there is any further harassment after action has been taken.**

Further information for students, parents and teachers

The following websites are highly recommended:

Bullying and Harassment:

Bullying – No Way! (www.bullyingnoway.com.au)
Plenty of useful information and fun resources for young people and adults can be found on this site.

Evelyn Field's site (www.bullying.com.au)
This site contains valuable information for parents, teachers and students.

Youth mental health support including information about bullying:

Kid's Help Line website (www.kidshelpline.com.au)
This site provides information about the Kids' Help Line free 24 hour telephone and online counselling service. Other useful information can also accessed through this site, including an informative Bullying Fact Sheet (click here) and strategies to help children and parents deal with bullying.

Beyond Blue website (www.beyondblue.org.au)This site provides contact details and professional advice for people who feel as though they may be suffering from depression.

The Reachout Foundation's site (www.reachout.com.au)
An excellent site which provides advice about a range of youth related issues including bullying.

Cyber Bullying and Cyber Safety

Cybersmart Online (www.cybersmart.gov.au)
A great site with plenty of fun links for young people, as well as a section for parents and teachers.

eSmart (www.esmartschools.org.au)
The College is currently undergoing the accreditation process for becoming an eSmart school. The eSmart website contains information for schools, parents and students.

Kidsmart (www.kidsmart.org.uk)
This is an award winning website providing practical advice about internet safety. Specific sections for students, teachers and parents are included on this site.

[Click here](#) to return to "College Expectations" section of Engagement Policy.