

 	<h1>STUDENT WELLBEING and ENGAGEMENT POLICY</h1>
Policy last reviewed	June 2025
Consultation (mandatory for this policy)	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date College Council will review this policy every 2 years or as directed by DET	June 2027



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Nathalia Secondary College on 03 5866 2331 or nathalia.sc@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Nathalia Secondary College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Social – community and demographics

Nathalia Secondary College was established in 1919. We have an excellent reputation as a public school in our community. We have a great tradition of excellence and being able to put the student at the centre of everything we do. We aim to get each student either work ready or onto further study.

Current SFO of 0.6031.

Nathalia is a 'can do' community. We support one another while being caring and concerned for each other. Student voice is an integral part of college planning. Enrolments have increased from 106 students in 2011 to 149 students in 2018. Staffing consists of a Principal, Assistant Principal, Leading Teacher and two Learning Specialists. There is a total of 17 teachers and 12 educational support staff.

We have a house system and we offer a variety of co-curricular enhancement and enrichment activities for our students. We are a homogenous group with very little cultural diversity.

With our small numbers we are really able to look after the individual in a holistic way. Having said this, curriculum is set with Year 7/8, 9/10 and Senior School.

The School Council is very active and we always have rigorous discussions about the direction of our College and how we maintain our good reputation whilst challenging, preparing and engaging our students (their children).

We seek the support of our community through the Nathalia Learning Community, also with links to local businesses. We use this to value add to our Careers program.

Our partnership with St. Mary of the Angels Catholic College is very positive and beneficial; our sharing of VCE classes and the Trade Training Centre project enhance our partnership and relationship.

Together with Nathalia Primary School, St Mary of the Angels and St Francis Primary Catholic School we form the Nathalia Learning Community. Ensuring the delivery of a consistent approach to education.

Educational

- Innovative, vibrant and progressive educational provision for Year 7 – 12.
- VCE, VET & VCAL courses.
- Provider for VET – Building & Construction Cert II and the facilities to provide Salon Assistant Cert II.
- We offer enough within our curriculum which builds capacity in our students to meet the challenges of a world outside of our College. Many of our activities are driven by student passion and interests, which does make for engaging programs.
- Staff and parents are very supportive of initiatives that are offered.
- Excellent further education pathways established and successful tertiary placements, apprenticeship and TAFE options.
- 100% of students gain their VCE or VCAL course completion.
- High Reliability Literacy Teaching Practices are used to support text activities across all levels.
- Nathalia Secondary College is implementing 'School Wide Positive Behaviour' framework.

Technological

- We aim for a 1:1 allocation of computers through specified or school provided devices
- Every learning space has Wi-Fi capability for staff and students.
- All teaching staff have laptops.
- Staff and Students use the student management system, SIMON.

Environmental

- Grounds are well maintained, including grassed areas and natural flora surrounds.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Nathalia Secondary College aims to prepare students for an ever changing world. Developing teenagers into young adults, giving them the knowledge and skills to be work ready or continue with further studies when they leave our college. Creating, in partnership, with parents and community; students who are well balanced, respectful, motivated, aspiring and contributing citizens.

At Nathalia Secondary College we reflect and affirm the values of our community which: Promote the value and dignity of the individual, to nurture and progress positive relationships with all those we interact with, based on trust, honesty and building integrity. We strive to develop individuals who will have the talents to problem solve in team situations, making a difference for our planet and its people.

All members of the college community live the school values C.L.E.A.R.

- Caring
- Learning
- Excellence
- Accountability
- Respect

Our Statement of Values is available online at: [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)

3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Nathalia Secondary College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal:

- Implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework
- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive

- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Nathalia Secondary College use a consistent instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Nathalia Secondary College school adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- our school's Statement of Values of CLEAR are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community.
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling.
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies, SPA data and communication to parents.
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and Student Voice. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Students complete PIVOT surveys that provide feedback to their classroom teachers about their Teaching and Learning practice.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections in our Homeroom system amongst students and through school productions, athletics and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Homeroom Teacher, Head of House, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- All students are welcome to visit the Wellbeing Hub if they require a safe space
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

Targeted

- each homeroom has a homeroom teacher as well as a Head of House teacher who monitor how the students are travelling and make referrals to the wellbeing team at the college.
- all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer. Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Action Plan - Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety for further information.

- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through our wellbeing system
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#) and linking in with diversity groups
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- Nathalia Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

Nathalia Secondary College utilises the following supports of students that have been identified to need individual support:

- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Navigator
- Lookout
- Attendance Plan
- Safety Plans
- Hands on Learning
- School Nurse Program

Nathalia Secondary College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services

- Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
- Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Nathalia Secondary College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Example School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- staff referrals

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community

- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our [Complaints Policy](#).

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Nathalia Secondary College's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Nathalia Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Head of House
- restorative practices
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

*refer to Nathalia Secondary College's behaviour matrix

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

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

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

7. Engaging with families

Nathalia Secondary College values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Nathalia Secondary College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)