



Vermont Secondary College
'Lift up thine eyes'

Student Engagement Policy

**Produced in consultation
with the school community**

**To be read in conjunction with the following policy
documents:**

- VSC Classroom Relationships (2016)
- VSC Dealing with Student Code of Conduct Infractions/Breaches (2014)
- Student Code of Conduct (2015)
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (2015)
- Emergency and Critical Incident Policy (2015)
- Mobile Device, Computer & Internet Acceptable Use Policy (2015)
- Student Expectations Policy (2015)
- Student Promotions Policy (2015)
- Student Attendance Policy (2015)
- Home Learning Policy (2015)
- Submission of Work – Deadline Policy (2015)
- Student Dress Code (2015)

Principal: *Tony Jacobs*

School Council President: *Steve Siems*

Date: *April 2016*

Introductory Global Statement – Student Engagement

The goal of Vermont Secondary College is to draw on the qualities of the young people at the college and allow them to flourish in areas of strength and develop in areas of weakness. We strive to support all students to engage fully with learning, develop the ability to recognise and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, act creatively, contribute to community, develop high expectations for self and handle challenging situations with resilience and respond effectively.

Vermont's approach is underpinned by the goals of the Melbourne declaration (MCEETYA, 2008) . Broadly that,

- Australian schooling promotes equality and excellence
- All young Australians become:
 - Successful learners
 - Confident and creative individuals
 - Active and informed citizens

In achieving these goals we recognise that all staff, parents and members of the Vermont Secondary College community have an active role in contributing to the development of all students at VSC.

Vermont Secondary College's approach to education is informed by best practice in education as outlined in relevant policy documents as well as academic research. Specifically, our approach is informed by the following policies:

- Principles of Learning and Teaching (PoLT) P-12 (2014)
- The e5 Instructional Model (2015)
- The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (2011)
- The Melbourne Declaration on Goals for Young Australians (2008)
- The Child Safe Standards (2016)

The Vermont Secondary College Engagement Policy provides an overview of our approach. It should be read in concert with other college policy documents to access specific details of our approach.

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1 – Introduction

The VSC Student Engagement policy has been developed by the VSC Student Engagement & Wellbeing Team in consultation with the broader VSC community. It reflects the college's School Strategic Plan (SSP), and will be reviewed and updated annually in line with the college's Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). These documents are both available on the college website: www.vermontsc.vic.edu.au

The school's policy is informed by the following Principles for Health and Wellbeing (DEECD, 2014).

Principle 1 – Maximise access and inclusion

Quality education and support for all, with extra effort directed to ensuring education and support is accessible and inclusive to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Principle 2 – Focus on outcomes

A focus on health, learning, development and wellbeing outcomes is upheld when designing, delivering, evaluating and improving education and support services.

Principle 3 – Evidence-informed and reflective practice

Policy and practice is informed by current and relevant evidence, known to be effective in improving outcomes. Research and evaluation is undertaken to grow the evidence base and enable effective and reflective practice.

Principle 4 – Holistic approach

Educators and support staff work collaboratively and professionals use multidisciplinary approaches and focus on the range of goals, aspirations and needs of children, young people and families.

Principle 5 – Person-centred and family sensitive practice

Successful schools see people in the context of their families and environment, and seek to support and empower people to lead and sustain healthy lives.

Principle 6 – Partnerships with families and communities

Ensuring children and young people have good health and wellbeing is the collective responsibility of families, schools, the community and government; requiring shared commitment and action.

Principle 7 – Cultural competence

To effectively meet the needs of all children, young people, requires an ability to understand and effectively communicate with people across cultures and recognise one's own world view.

Principle 8 – Commitment to excellence

Education providers and services have high expectations for those they work with, and continually assess their own work practices to find opportunities for improvement.

School Profile

Vermont Secondary College is proud of its proven record of academic performance achieved whilst preparing its young citizens for an increasingly diverse range of student learning and career pathways. Vermont Secondary College was established in 1962 and is located in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It is a large, co-educational, single campus secondary college of approximately 1338 students and some 970+ families. The college has 93.5 equivalent full time teaching staff, 4 Principal class and 22.7 Education Support Staff. The College ethos is reflected in its values of Excellence, Integrity, Responsibility, Respect and Tolerance.

At Vermont Secondary College we place a strong emphasis on knowing and valuing our students whilst personalising and enriching their learning experiences. We are committed to:

- Promoting the achievement of excellence in a learning environment that is safe and caring, and embraces diversity and
- The development of lifelong learning skills that motivate and enable all students to achieve their individual goals and make a positive contribution to the global community.

In a caring, well-disciplined atmosphere, the college expects and achieves high standards in all aspects of student leadership, endeavour, behaviour and presentation. Our college values of Excellence, Integrity, Responsibility, Respect and Tolerance are consistently reinforced in student learning, teaching practice and through school management.

To support this learning environment we are fortunate to have an outstanding and dedicated workforce made up of teaching and Education Support staff. In addition, the now completed Stage Two rebuild has greatly assisted the college in implementing new academic programs and has allowed us to further build upon our positive and productive learning environment. We are currently working with architects and the school community to develop our new Maths/Science complex to be completed by early next year.

The college is consistently ranked amongst the top non-selective State Secondary Colleges based on VCE and NAPLAN Student Outcomes which are consistently 'higher' than the 'Median of all Victorian government schools' in levels of performance.

Vermont Secondary College is an outstanding college in supporting students to achieve impressive VCE results and the vast majority access tertiary pathways. In 2014, 16 of our Year 12 VCE students achieved a study score of 95+ (top 5% in the state), 26 students achieved a study score over 90+ (top 10% in the state) and a total of 50 students achieved a study score over 80 (top 20% in the state). What is tremendously satisfying is the fact that 56.57% of our students (99 in total) achieved a study score above 65. Also in 2014, 97.23% of our Year 12 students were offered first round tertiary places. Following subsequent offers, 100% of the 2014 VCE cohort have gained a

tertiary offer with 86% of our cohort accepting a university placement. A significant proportion of these students achieved high entry cut-off scores.

While the college is always extremely proud of our highest performing students, we are equally proud of all students who have achieved individual excellence by attaining their goals. As a non-selective school, Vermont Secondary College is proud of its ability to cater for all students wishing to continue on into Year 12. With our results over the last four years, we have been able to significantly move 'the tail' up.

The College emphasizes the encouragement, recognition and celebration of outstanding performance by students academically, in leadership and co-curricular participation through its house structure. Student leadership is enhanced through a range of leadership opportunities including School & House Captains, Performing Arts, Social Justice, Sport & Form Captains.

The College's comprehensive range of co-curricular activities, including a sister school exchange in Germany, French tour, acclaimed instrumental music, choral and performing arts program, all support the growth of students into confident, successful and contributing citizens. The college is also a premier sporting school, with many students competing at a local, state and national level.

Vermont Secondary College views education as a partnership and values the active support and participation of parents in a wide range of college activities and decision making groups. The educational needs of children are best served in an environment where parents feel part of the college community.

Our Grade 6 to Year 7 transition program ensures that students new to the college feel welcome, comfortable and secure in the purpose-built Year 7 Learning Centre. This, combined with the Year 7 Integrated Studies program and supportive House structure, contributes significantly to a smooth, safe transition into secondary school.

"The college's true worth lies in its ability to help the children grow as people, not just as students." *Past parent*

School Values Philosophy and Vision (Whole-school prevention statement)

Approach to Student Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Vermont Secondary College promotes the achievement of excellence in a learning environment that is safe, caring and accepting of diversity. Our College is committed to the development of life-long learning skills that motivate and enable all students to achieve their individual goals and make a positive contribution to the global community.

Vermont Secondary College is committed to a culture of child safety and ensures the maintenance of policies and procedures that demonstrate zero tolerance of child abuse.

The College's approach to Student Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies is informed by a whole school approach to achieving wellness rather than focusing on isolated issues, behaviours or outcomes. It is heavily informed by the World Health Organisation's Health Promoting Schools model (1998).

The model recognises that whilst a proportion of students will experience mental health issues and psychosocial problems that require specific intervention, the whole school community must be involved in the promotion of wellbeing. At Vermont Secondary College, all structures, programs, processes and curricula are informed by this approach. Thus the College has developed a model that supports all students based on need. This may be at a universal, cohort or individual student level.

To ensure that all elements of the College's approach to engagement and wellbeing are informed by evidence base and best practice in wellbeing, the College undertook an audit of our approach to wellbeing in 2013. The audit drew on feedback from the whole school community as well as health professionals, academic research on best practice in student wellbeing and government policy to redefine, restructure and realign our approach. Accordingly, this policy was heavily informed by that process.

As a school we are a community, but also exist within communities. These communities can be diverse and reflect similarity and shared values but also difference and disconnection. In this context we are not the only formal body or institution that responds to and promotes the success of young people. Accordingly, at Vermont Secondary College we continually seek to develop, have developed and maintain effective relationships with a number of groups and agencies within the community that contribute to positive outcomes for our students.

Universal Interventions/Approaches

Universal interventions and approaches are those that create safe, inclusive and empowering environments that foster an enthusiasm for learning and support student wellbeing. In meeting its obligations to support student wellbeing at this level the College has adopted a number of programs and structures. These include:

The VSC Building Capacity Framework

The Building Capacity Framework is a whole-school model for promoting engagement and wellbeing that aligns with our global statement on student engagement and wellbeing and informs all college approaches, processes and programs.

The Building Capacity Program/Approach at Vermont Secondary responds to and is informed by the following national and/or state policies:

- The National Safe Schools Framework (DEEWR, 2011).
- The Principles of Learning and Teaching (DEECD, 2015).
- National Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011).
- Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance (DEECD, 2014).

The program is informed by the following curricula/resources:

- AusVELS (VCAA, 2014).
- Sensibility (Beyond Blue, 2010).
- Mind Matters (Australian Government Department of Health, 2014).
- Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework (DEECD, 2011).
- Building Resilience (DET, 2015)

The Building Capacity approach presents in different guises in different levels. Broadly the approach can be understood to inform the following:

- The College's House Structure Years 7-12
- The College's approach to Student Services, Integration and the Program for Students with Disability
- College Camps Years 7-12
- Social and Emotional Learning Program Year 7 and Year 8
- Building Capacity (SEL and Pathways) Program Year 9 and Year 10
- Senior Programs – VCE (SEL, Pathways)

For further information see the Building Capacity Framework (in development).

Social and Emotional Learning

In 2013, Vermont Secondary College began to implement a whole school Social and Emotional Learning Program in the context of the pre-existing House Structure, Restorative Practices/Relationships approach, Pathways and Transitions models and other wellbeing programs (PEP/Senior Programs/Subject Based Activities/Camps).

The program at VSC was developed in the policy context of the National Safe Schools Framework and its vision that “All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing” (NSSF, 2011). Specifically, that schools must “commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach” (NSSF, 2011).

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) was nominated in the VSC context is a formal curriculum that supports students in “the process of developing the ability to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively.” (CASEL, 2003).

In the VSC context the program is about relationship building and knowing the student but in the context of a curriculum that encourages students to reflect on their relationships with others, their decision-making, levels of resilience, and goal setting.

SEL programs have been found to:

- Prompt a change in school climate to improve peer relations and reduce bullying. (Allen, 2009)
- “promote skills, behaviours, attitudes, and environmental factors that are incompatible with bullying and other forms of negative peer interactions”. (CASEL, 2012)
- Support the development of protective elements including positive relationships with adults, academic achievement and school connections, particularly for socially isolated adolescents. (Hall-Lande, Eisenberg, Christenson, Neumark-Sztainer, 2007)
- are successful at all educational levels. (Durlak, Weissberg, Schellinger, Dymnicki and Taylor, 2011)
- increase the ability to empathise, collaborate and improve academic performance. (Goleman in Linke, 2011)
- mitigate against the recognised relationship between disruptive behaviour and deficiencies in cognition and limited social or emotional skills. (Larmar,2006)

The program was launched for the Year 7 Cohort in 2013. It was expanded to include the Year 8 cohort in 2014 and to include the whole junior school in 2015. In 2016, the SEL program will expand further to inform all programs in the Senior School.

Restorative Relationships, Practices and the Vermont Values

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. All relationships between students and staff should be informed by this ethic and all conflicts that arise should be dealt with primarily using a restorative practices framework.

Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management
- separate the deed from the doer
- are systematic, not situational
- 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).

All House staff are trained in Restorative Practices as are a large number of teaching staff.

House Model

The House Model at Vermont Secondary College provides a framework for the provision of student learning, support and intervention services as well as student leadership and to promote a sense of community. The structure consists of three Houses: Hotham, Macedon and Stirling. Within each house there is a House Management Team:

- An Assistant Principal
- A Head of House
- A Student Manager at Year 7, 8 & 9
- Two Student Managers at Years 10-12

These teams are supported as required by the Student Wellbeing and Pathways and Transitions teams.

The role of the House Management team and in particular the Student Manager is to provide the smooth daily operation of each year level House group and to create a cohesive, harmonious, productive and orderly House and college climate. Student Managers look after the general well-being of House students at the year level, have a highly visible presence, implementing the standards and procedures within the college, and are the first port-of-call in communicating with student families. This model of Student Management ensures consistency with students and families as they move through the College.

The House system also provides a way for staff to be aligned in terms of teaching and co-curricular programs, with many staff in the junior school teaching within their House. Students participate in a range of curricular and co-curricular programs and within the House such as:

- Camps
- Sport (Swimming and Athletics carnivals)
- Performing Arts (Talent Show & Theatre Sports)
- Community Focus Days
- Debating
- Year level activity and curriculum-focused activity days
- SEL and other targeted student wellbeing programs and initiatives

As well as this there is a vibrant Student Leadership structure that allows for student voice across all levels of the school. Within and outside of this structure students are involved in numerous leadership initiatives that include:

- The High Resolves Program
- Student Leadership Forum
- Social Justice and Community-focused groups (Social Justice, Year 11 SWAP & Leo's)
- House Community Focus Days

Student Leadership Structure

In 2010, in conjunction with the development of the House Model, a new Student Leadership structure was developed. A formal structure was created that aligned with the model with each House having leaders at each level. The House Student Leadership model was created to replace the SRC (Student Representative Council). The model was then reviewed in 2014. It was felt it was important to have a strong and vibrant Student Leadership at VSC as:

- Building the leadership capacity and voice of young people is an integral part of the overall wellbeing and connectedness of students at Vermont SC.
- There is need for student leadership to focus on building the capacity of our young people as leaders and global citizens. This requires Student Leaders and Student Leadership Programs to uphold the Vermont Values and be exemplars for the student body as a whole.
- There is a real need to develop in young people an inherent sense of community, volunteerism, civics and citizenship through leadership programs within the school and wider community.
- There is a need to build the capacity of staff to enable the young people in the school to have a real go and to show leadership through a range of curricular and co-curricular programs.
- The school must enable students to be active in decision-making within the college through House leadership, leadership within clubs and groups and recognize these activities and events as leadership.

Along with the formal House Leadership structure a number of other leadership initiatives have been developed to further enhance student voice:

- The Introduction of the SEL program at Year 7, and 8, as well as plans for the extension of this program in Years 9 and 10 in the near future.
- The High Resolves (global citizenship) program at Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.
- A number of voluntary student groups within the college that include the: Year 11 SWAP team; Social Justice group, the Leo's Club (affiliated with the local Lions Club)
- Plans for the introduction of a Leadership class at Year 9 and/or 10 into the formal curriculum
- The State Government funded Advance Program – Duke of Ed class at year 10 within the formal curriculum

Citizenship and Values (Behavioural Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities, Bullying)

Every member of the Vermont Secondary College community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Similarly, every member of the Vermont Secondary College community deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. The 'Vermont Values' of Excellence, Integrity, Responsibility, Respect and Tolerance reflect our college ethos and underpin the rights and responsibilities of all members of our college community:

- Excellence – In the achievement of individual and team goals (Do your very best)
- Integrity - Of individuals in their words, actions and relationships (Do the right thing)
- Responsibility - For our words and action (Be in charge of yourself)
- Respect - For self, others and property (Consider others)
- Tolerance - Of diversity and individual differences (Understand and accept that people are different)

At Vermont, we pride ourselves on our inclusiveness and our commitment to our school and local community. We strive towards equity and justice, and to embrace and celebrate diversity. We welcome all students and families regardless of gender, sexual orientation, religion, race or socio-economic status.

We work towards achieving and maintaining this by:

- Publicly acknowledging our diversity through a range of college programs and curriculum;
- maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community;
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences within the College community;
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs.

All members of the college community are encouraged to take equal responsibility for the promotion of our collective college values, as well as the responsibility for the promotion of the rights and responsibilities of all college community members. At VSC we believe that students' behaviour contributes directly to the educational, social, emotional and physical development of themselves and those around them. Similarly, we feel that actively modelling and teaching social and emotional skills, as well as behavioural expectations and norms, creates a highly predictable and secure environment that allows students to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from each other. We have developed a set of separate responsibilities of principals, teachers and wellbeing staff to ensure that students and parents/carers have a clear understanding of what can be expected from the school.

Key college policies relating to the areas below are listed in the appendices at the end of this document. They seek to address the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the college with regard to:

- Bullying – refer attached policy at Appendix
- Cyberbullying – refer attached policy at Appendix
- Personal expression
- Physical environment
- Participation
- Equity
- Diversity and individuality
- Safety

Rights and Responsibilities of Students:

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn • The best education and instruction that the college resources can provide • Be treated with respect in a safe and secure school environment without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment. • A non-discriminatory environment • Be part of the decision-making processes of the college • Know the school rules and the disciplinary measures if these rules are broken • A supportive school environment and be able to seek assistance when needed • Participate fully in the school's educational program 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete set work on time and to the best of their ability • Come to class prepared for work with books, stationery and diaries, and the requirements for specialist subjects • Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn • Be thoughtful, sensitive and courteous to others • Respect the property of others and to care for school property • Wear the prescribed school uniform • Ensure they communicate appropriately with student managers, teachers and other staff • Involve themselves in improving the college climate by displaying positive behaviours that demonstrate respect to themselves and others. • Obey school rules. • Attend and remain at school and be punctual at all times • Contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. • To manage their own learning and participate as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and pathways. • Care for school grounds and remove rubbish

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers/Guardians

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Parents have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best education and instruction for their children that the college resources can provide • Expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged • that the college's curriculum will be carried out by teachers with a firm, fair, and caring attitude • Be informed in writing of the student's progress at least twice a year. Further contact to be made as the need arises • Receive regular communication from the college including information regarding alterations to the regular college organisation, college policies and college activities • Be involved in the decision-making processes of the college • Expect a safe school environment • Know the school rules and the disciplinary measures if these rules are broken 	<p>Parents have the responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure their child attends school every day. • Provide encouragement, support and facilities for developing regular homework and study habits • Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours. • Inform the school of external matters which may affect their child's ability to learn • Reinforce the need for students to obey school rules • Encourage acceptable codes of behaviour • Provide explanation of all student absences • Attend parent/student/teacher interviews • Ensure that children who are unwell are not sent to school • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers/College Staff

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • Work in a supportive environment and to seek assistance when needed • Be treated with respect • Participate in the decision-making processes of the college • Expect students to be willing to learn and obey school rules • A safe, healthy and non-discriminatory work environment • Expect that they will be able to be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student 	<p>Teachers have the responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of school rules, policies and procedures, and be consistent in the enforcement of those rules • Adopt a caring and supportive attitude with students and arrange special assistance where necessary • Assist in the development and maintenance of college policies • Participate in the process of consultation with parents and other staff about the progress and welfare of students. This will include informing parents of students' progress and behaviour on at least two occasions during the year • Provide educational experiences which are challenging and purposeful • Provide experiences which will encourage students to work towards their potential and cultivates worthwhile interests and attitudes, at the same time being flexible and accepting of the ideas of students • fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. • Know their students, how they learn and how to teach them effectively. • Know the content they teach, use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning, and plan and assess for effective learning.

Cohort Specific Interventions

Cohort (population-specific) engagement strategies are those that meet the varied needs of vulnerable cohorts and include both prevention and intervention strategies. At Vermont Secondary College these strategies broadly sit within our Universal Strategies that include mechanisms to respond to issues that present within a cohort.

Formal data on all cohorts is regularly collected and analysed through House Management Meetings, Junior and Senior Transition Meetings, Senior School Meetings and Student Engagement Team Meetings. Further, significant informal data collection occurs within year level Student Management teams. This data informs the delivery of programs as outlined above.

Central to Cohort Specific Interventions are Transition programs and processes. Transition programs and processes at VSC are overseen, implemented and reviewed by the Student Engagement Team (SET), and implemented by a range of staff, led by the Junior School Transition Manager for Year 7, and the college Director of Pathways & Transitions for all other levels. They are supported directly by the Registrar, the House teams, the Wellbeing team and the Program Managers.

Transition programs and processes across Years 7-12 are integral elements of the college Building Capacity Program (BCP), including information evenings for parents and students, level assemblies, house activities, course and pathways selection, camps, activity days etc.

Transition to Year 7

- The college places a strong emphasis on successful transition to the college for the main incoming cohort at Year 7, in particular those coming from the Vermont Cluster primary schools: Livingstone, Rangeview and Vermont. The transition teams of the four cluster schools meet every term to discuss a range of issues and share ideas. One key program is the Year 5, 6 & 7 Literacy Common Assessment Task, used for cross moderation.
- All cluster Year 5 and 6 students are invited to view the VSC production in August
- The college principal, accompanied by Year 7 student alumni, visits the three cluster primary schools in Term 1 to address the Year 6 students.
- The teachers of all incoming Year 6 students are invited to complete both a detailed transition pro-forma for each student, as well as a 1:1 interview with VSC wellbeing staff. Cluster transition coordinators and/or assistant principals are requested to provide information also, particularly with regard to students with special needs.
- In September, all incoming Year 6 students complete the Edutest to provide the college with rich educational data, with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy.
- Students coming alone or in a pair only are placed in classes with similar students, and all are invited to attend an extra pre-orientation day the week before the main orientation day. Their parents are invited to a special morning tea and conversation.

- Additional orientation sessions are conducted for special needs students.
- Students are placed in form groups and house groups through a complex process, in line with the wealth of data received about them.
- The family orientation information evening includes a House assembly for the Year 6s.
- The staff focus on the state-wide Orientation Day is getting to know the students, and them getting to know their two key VSC staff, the Integrated Studies (IS) teacher, and the Student Manager (SM). The IS teacher leads the class through a range of introductory activities, including completing the 'Passport to VSC'. The SM introduces the students to their first Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) session.
- As part of the Orientation Day program, all Year 6 students are photographed for staff reference, and also receive a rubber duck in their house colour. Over the summer break they use their iPads to photograph their duck and its adventures. On their return to the college these photos provide the opportunity for ice-breaking conversations.
- Year 7 home rooms are located in the purpose-built Year 7 Centre, where the students undertake the majority of their classes. The three Year 7 Student Managers (SMs) and the Junior Programs team are all located in the centre, which also houses dedicated Year 7 toilets. The Year 7 lockers and the areas immediately adjacent to the centre are designated for Year 7s only.
- The IS teacher, with an allotment of twelve 75 minute periods per fortnight, teaches the class English and Humanities, and acts as the house home-group teacher. They work closely with the SM in all aspects of student wellbeing, attend the orientation camps in March, and share the task of delivering the SEL program.
- The SEL program includes a review session for student feedback each semester, ensuring student voice is enabled and programs are implemented in response to particular cohort needs.
- Students identified as having particular issues with transition may be supported by one of the college alumni mentors.
- All Year 7 families are invited to the 'Dinner on the Deck' in February to share time with the other House families and teaching staff.
- All Year 7 parents are then invited to attend a parent orientation evening in March, which covers key aspects of the college and its programs as they relate to Year 7s.

Internal transitions

- Students and parents are kept well-informed about transition programs and processes via a range of methods, including the website, newsletter, emails and even 1:1 interviews.
- Information evenings are conducted for each year level, often on multiple evenings for senior levels to cover the many required aspects.
- The House Senior and Junior Transitions teams, comprising the Heads of House, relevant Assistant Principals and supported by the Director of Pathways & Transitions, the Wellbeing Leaders, meet regularly

throughout the term to monitor student progress and make recommendations to students, parent sand staff.

- Students with special needs are particularly closely monitored and supported by the Integration & Support Leader and/or the Director of Pathways & Transitions.
- The largest internal transitions, from the Junior School to the Senior School (Year 9 to Year 10), and from the AusVELS curriculum to the VCE (Year 10 to Year 11) are enhanced by targeted course selection processes, and specialised programs like Fast-Track interviews for Year 10s and the Transition camp for Year 9s.
- New enrolments are generally first interviewed by the Assistant Principal, and are then enrolled by the relevant Student Manager, supported by the head of House. Information is sought directly from the current school staff. Any incoming students exhibiting academic concerns are also Edutested.

Individual Student Interventions

Individual (student-specific) engagement strategies are those that identify at risk students and develop responses individual to the circumstances of the student. These are deployed for a range of reasons but particularly when attendance is inconsistent or positive behaviours are not demonstrated. Students who require individual intervention are identified through the Student Services and House Teams and a triage model is used to identify risk and provide appropriate supports. At Vermont Secondary College Individual Student Intervention strategies include:

The Development of Individual Education, Learning, Safety, Behaviour Management and Support Plans – These plans respond to student need and put in place processes, procedures, agreements and processes that support students to engage with learning in a safe, secure, effective and student centered manner.

Student Alumni Mentoring Program (SAM) – A program that works to improve educational and wellbeing outcomes for at risk students.

Student Manager Intervention – Support students with administrative, educational and wellbeing needs. Contribute to the development of positive, reflective and socially aware students through one on one intervention.

Student Wellbeing Intervention/SSSO – Students with specific learning or wellbeing needs can be referred to Student Wellbeing and Student Support Services Staff through the House and Student Services Teams. This leads to the development of a range of interventions to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing.

Further information on Individual Student Interventions can be accessed through the following policy documents:

- Student Code of Conduct (2015)
- Dealing with Student Code of Conduct Infractions/Breaches (2014)
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (2015)

Critical Incident and Suicide Postvention Policy

The experience of Critical Incidents within the school and school community can be very difficult and challenging times for schools. Vermont Secondary College has a clearly defined process to deal with such issues. This is elucidated in the Emergency and Critical Incident Policy (2015)

School Actions and Consequences

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in 'Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'. Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures.

A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges (exclusion from activities, electives, excursions, camps etc.)
- Withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class. The student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.

Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed satisfactorily or in the regular classroom time at an alternative reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any designated school recess may be used for this work.

Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

- Convening of a support group (See 'Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines' for process required).

Policy Review Date – This policy will be renewed annually in line with the creation of the College’s Annual Implementation Plan.

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