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LALOR SECONDARY COLLEGE

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

2026-2028

AIM

Lalor Secondary College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students.

Ratified by School Council: 26th March 2026
Review date: March 2028

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact [insert school contact details].

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.

Lalor 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

Since 1963, Lalor Secondary College, a Year 7 – 12 co-educational school has serviced the communities of Lalor, Thomastown and Epping. The college is located in a residential area north of Melbourne in the City of Whittlesea. It is set on four acres of land, with well-maintained grounds which include grassed, asphalted and shaded areas, as well as a number of synthetic sporting surfaces. The College is located in close proximity to RMIT, La Trobe University, Melbourne Polytechnic and the Whittlesea TECH school. The school is a partner school of the Whittlesea TECH school and has close relationships with each of the Tertiary Education institutions.

The College values of Caring, Cooperation, Achievement, Honesty and Pride promote the cultural diversity of the student population which is drawn predominantly from the local neighbourhood areas. Enrolment figures for 2026 are 1130 students. The student population is characterised by a high proportion of Camps, Sport and Excursion Funding (CSEF) recipients and a very high proportion of language other than English (LOTE) speakers at home. Approximately 44 different nationalities among the students leads to a culturally and linguistically diverse group of learners. Our learning programs are enriched by drawing on the range and number of cultures and backgrounds represented among the students. Student achievement and engagement is similar to like group schools and retention is high. The VCE program offers extensive subject choice and pathway options, with the college's VCE/VM program having been in operation since 2010.

The 27-million-dollar Capital Works project initiated by the Victorian Government to upgrade and modernise Lalor Secondary College was completed in 2024, with the new Health and Fitness Centre with multi-court gymnasium complete and open for use. The new Administration Area, Library/Resource Centre, Arts spaces, Senior Study Centre and classrooms are now also open and in use. These upgrades will support the school in reaching their educational goals and ensuring improvements are targeted where needed most. These works will complement the Innovation Centre, our most recent building works funded by school council, that contains two digital technology spaces and a purpose-built maker space as well as the Science Centre which has created and new learning hub on the North side of the school. The school grounds are well maintained and include six tennis courts, 4 outdoor basketball courts, new landscaped garden areas as well as an astro turf soccer and hockey field.

Laptops are supplied by the school to Year 7 to 12 students which will expand to include Year 11 and 12 in the coming years as a priority of the school council.

The school owns a 25-seat bus, which is used for excursions, camps, sports and physical education activities. There are four car parks on the grounds providing adequate parking for all staff and visitors.

While the college currently provides a diverse Learning and Teaching program, the changing needs of our students and community require regular updates. In 2026 the school has established a clearly defined Lalor Secondary College Instructional Model that is taught to all students, allowing students to locate themselves within the lesson providing greater agency and understanding of what they are meant to be doing throughout a lesson. This is closely linked to the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 which is being implemented as part of the schools teaching and learning direction.

Lalor Secondary College has focused on the Importance of Trauma Informed Practice through the Berry Street Education Model and the Refugee Education Support Program. Both of these programs have provided strategies for teaching and learning that enables teachers to increase engagement of students with complex, unmet learning needs and to successfully improve all students' self-regulation, relationships, wellbeing, growth and academic achievement. The school has developed clearly defined supports and strategies connected to the five key Berry Street domains of Body, Relationship, Stamina, Engagement, and Character. This partnership as well as the new partnership with the Resilience

Project have been used to create and deliver the year seven and eight pastoral classes and are embedded in staff practices and interactions around the college.

This has led to the college establishing the Lalor Secondary College Engagement framework. This document uses various DE resources to establish clearly defined routines so that the classroom and learning environment become predictable for all students. This provides for a positive learning environment and guides staff into a way of operating that supports the needs of all students.

The college provides an established program for Years 7 & 8, some choice in Year 9 and increased specialist subjects in Year 10. The Years 11 & 12 students have access to a wide range of VCE, VET and VCE/VM pathways. The college has also been innovative in terms of curriculum delivery and teaching and learning strategies, with a recent focus on the Helen Timperley Inquiry Cycle to inform teacher practice and measure impact on learning, including the targeted use of data. This also saw the introduction of an Inquiry Subject introduced at Year 8 in close collaboration with the Whittlesea TECH school.

Special features of the college include a Language program offering four languages. For those students experiencing difficulties with their Literacy, the 'Boost' program is provided in Years 7,8, 9 & 10 through separate targeted classes and activities. Year 9 students also have the opportunity to participate in the Advance Program incorporating the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Extensive opportunities for student enrichment are offered, including a school production, cultural concert, the school magazine-Milpera, the Year 7 Camp, the Year 9 Tasmania trip, the Local Parliamentary Convention, Mooting through La Trobe University and the Year 12 Study Skills conference. There are also various clubs operating including the Arties Club, Chess Club, Science Club, Maths Club, eSports, Walking Club, just to name a few.

The college has a well-established Wellbeing team that provides support for students in a range of areas including an integrated Course and Career Development program operating throughout the middle and senior school as well as a Student Wellbeing program which includes integration and student counselling. Targeted programs in the area of bullying and cyber bullying are presented each year, and partnerships with La Trobe University have been established to address these issues.

Students are encouraged to build their leadership capabilities though a range of opportunities which include SRC Representatives, Peer Support Leaders, School Captains, Sports Captains, House Captains, Art Captains, STEM leaders and Class Captains. The school also has a strong partnership with ABCN that offers various leadership programs across a range of year levels. The college values of Honesty, Caring, Cooperation, Achievement and Pride were developed with a high level of student involvement. The values are prominently displayed in every classroom, reinforced at the start of every year and consequently have had a significant and positive impact on learning and behaviour.

Effective communication between parents / carers / guardians and the school is promoted and encouraged through the use of Compass, the online 'Eagle' newsletter, information evenings, parent/teacher conferences and at various social events. Teachers will contact parents / carers / guardians directly if there is an issue about non-submission of work. The preferred mode of communication is through Compass (the schools information management portal). All parents / carers / guardians are encouraged to ensure their mobile number and personal email details are kept up to date for the communication to be effective.

Students are both encouraged and expected to do their best whether in the classroom, at sport or when participating in extra-curricular events. Achievements, academic and in a range of other areas, are celebrated and rewarded. The college holds an annual Presentation Evening and Year 12 Graduation Evening, as well as Semester Assemblies where a range of awards are presented to students. In 2019 the schools Reward and Recognition program continued to expand in recognising the achievements of students in more areas that included Community, Leadership, ARTS and Sport.

The recognition of student academic achievement includes Bronze, Silver and Gold Honour Awards, as well as a Principals Award.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our Mission

The community of Lalor Secondary College acknowledges the ability and the right of all students to learn and to experience success. All students are encouraged and challenged to reach their full potential in a safe and nurturing environment.

Our Vision

Our vision for Lalor Secondary College is to be a vibrant school where learning is valued and students empowered to become lifelong, socially responsible learners; where a challenging and diverse curriculum caters for the variety of learning styles; where the varying talents of students and staff are recognised and celebrated; where excellence and effort are rewarded

Our school is a place where…

- *Students feel safe and well cared for and are expected to reach their academic potential.*
- *Students have the opportunity to engage in a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities.*
- *Everyone is expected to "live" the College Values: Achievement, Caring, Cooperation, Honesty and Pride.*
- *Diversity is valued.*

Our Values

- PRIDE
- ACHIEVEMENT
- CARING
- COOPERATION
- HONESTY

Honour Be Ours
Lalor Secondary College

Our Statement of Values is available online at: *https://lalorsc.vic.edu.au/our-college/*

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

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

Whole School

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents / carers / guardians

- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing through engaging with the Berry Street Education Model
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive driven by the students themselves
- 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 support coordinator data and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VM to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Lalor Secondary College use the LSC teaching and learning 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 Lalor Secondary College 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 are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents / carers / guardians 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 and communication to parents / carers / guardians via the school awards and recognition program
- 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 other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, student management teams, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, leadership roles, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing team, Sub-School leaders, Assistant Principals 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
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
    - Respectful Relationships
    - Consent presentations
    - The Berry St Educational Model
    - Positive Classroom Management Strategies (PCMS), via VTLM 2.0
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQA+ students.

- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

Targeted

- each year group has an Assistant Principal, Sub-School leader & 2 student support coordinators responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- 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 our Programs Leader
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Lalor Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- 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
- Cultural Support and Transition Leader provides direct support to students and families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to ensure a positive transition, sense of belonging, and sustained engagement in learning and school life.
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

Lalor 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
- develop Student Support Plans and/or a Behaviour Support Plan when required
- 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 Invigor8ing Education, and other Flexible Learning Options (FLO's)

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

Lalor Secondary College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing and Disability Inclusion teams play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Lalor Secondary College 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

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive 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 and management

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values, Student Code of Behaviour and Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Lalor Secondary College's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Lalor Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents / carers / guardians will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Lalor Secondary College 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 Student Support Coordinator team
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in 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 Lalor Secondary College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

Lalor 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 / carers / guardians have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents / carers / guardians and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent / carer / guardian 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

Lalor 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, including attendance and absence data

Lalor Secondary College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website - www.lalorsc.vic.edu.au/about-us/policies/
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs

- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents / carers / guardians and students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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

9. Authorisation to use physical restraint and seclusion

Regulation 25 (Restraint from danger) of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 provides that a member of staff of a Government school may take any reasonable action that is immediately required to restrain a student of the school from acts or behaviour that are dangerous to the member of staff, the student, or any other person. The Restraint and Seclusion Policy authorises school staff to use physical restraint and seclusion when reasonable and immediately required to protect the member of staff, the student, or any other person from acts or behaviour that might be dangerous to them. The primary purpose of using physical restraint and seclusion is to prevent harm to a student or someone else.

Children cannot consent to being physically restrained or secluded.

Parents / carers / guardians cannot consent to the use of physical restraint or seclusion.

Clinicians or practitioners cannot authorise, consent to, or approve the use of physical restraint or seclusion in a school. If this occurs contact the Principal Behaviour Support Adviser by email: restraint.seclusion@education.vic.gov.au

Use of physical restraint and seclusion to prevent immediate harm

Victorian government school staff may only use physical restraint and seclusion where:

- there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to a student or others and
- the physical restraint and seclusion are reasonable in all the circumstances and
- there is no less restrictive measure available in the circumstances.

During physical restraint and seclusion incidents, the student/s must be visually monitored for signs of distress and pain to ensure the student's physical health is not jeopardised and that the student, other students, and staff are safe.

Staff must ensure that the use of physical restraint and seclusion is time limited and that it stops as soon as the immediate threat of harm or danger to the student or others has passed.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education 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
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support
- Behaviour - Students
- Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Restraint and Seclusion
- www.lalorsc.vic.edu.au/about-us/policies/