

Produced in consultation with the school community

To be read in conjunction with *'Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'*

1.0 School profile

Weeroona College Bendigo is located on the northern side of Bendigo and currently has a school population of 610, Year 4 to Year 10 students. We have very strong educational partnerships with our associate primary schools in the White Hills cluster, the local Bendigo year 7 to 10 colleges and Bendigo Senior Secondary College. Weeroona College Bendigo is part of the Bendigo Education Plan and our school has been totally rebuilt with all new facilities completed at the end of 2012. Prior to this we have been part of a building site for four and a half years.

The new spaces provide for a wide range of flexible teaching and learning activities including: independent study, peer tutoring, small and large group work, project based learning, lecture based learning, seminar style learning, research, performances and presentations by students, learning by building and doing, community service, social and emotional learning and experimentation. Our new learning environment features ecologically sustainable design features, including natural lighting and ventilation, the use of sustainable materials, and dispersed technology means that staff and students can access ICT anywhere, any time.

WCB has a firm commitment to maximising the educational opportunities for each and every one of our students and we place a high emphasis on all students achieving Personal Excellence, which is one of our three core values. Each student has a Personal Learning Plan where teachers and parents can track progress with their students to ensure that individual learning needs are met. Literacy and Numeracy are a high priority at Weeroona College Bendigo where we work to ensure that our teaching supports all students across the curriculum. We are a community of readers and encourage reading opportunities at school and at home and this year we are implementing a new model for teaching Mathematics that supports individual learners.

Our college has made the development of a high quality curriculum that caters for the needs of all students a major priority over the past few years. A balanced core curriculum is offered for Primary to Year 8 students. Year 9 & 10 students study a mixture of core and elective studies and our primary students have access to specialist classes such as Music, Library, Art, Information Technology and Physical Education. Our year 10 students have access to VCE courses and our year 9/10 to VET programs with successful pathways to Bendigo Senior Secondary College, our year 11 and 12 provider.

WCB has a strong culture of extracurricular programs. We have a proud tradition in the Performing and Visual Arts including a strongly supported instrumental music program, bands and arts spectaculars and College productions. The College also has very high standard sporting programs, where our students compete as the Weeroona Warriors. We are proud of our students who perform exceptionally well in a broad range of interschool sports activities. We have forged community partnerships with the YMCA Harriers, the Bendigo Umpires Association, the Sandhurst/Weeroona Cricket Club and the Bendigo & District Cricket Association as part of our Building Stronger Links Program. Another highlight of the College program is our participation in the RACV Energy Breakthrough competitions. The college has an outstanding record of success over many years and the students, staff and families involved have benefitted enormously from this program.

1 | This policy was reviewed by school council in 2016
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Weeroona College Bendigo places a high emphasis on caring for the welfare of each individual student. The College has a student welfare team which has included a Student Welfare Coordinator, a Chaplain and a School Nurse. An important component of the support we provide for each student is their Learning Advisor. The Learning Advisor works to support each of their students by working closely with them for the time that they are a student at our College in all aspects of their wellbeing and education and through close tracking of their learning and contact with home. We work hard to ensure that all our students are safe and supported in their learning environment.

2.0 Whole-school prevention statement

Weeroona College Bendigo strives 'To have a high level of student wellbeing where students are motivated and engaged with a strong sense of connectedness to their peers, the school and their teachers.'

Our core values are:

- **Respect** - Accepting difference and treating others with empathy and tolerance.
- **Integrity**- behaving truthfully, in a trustworthy manner and taking responsibility for one's actions.
- **Personal excellence** – Seeking to perform at one's own highest possible standard.

Weeroona College Bendigo is a community of students, parents and teachers committed to providing a safe, secure and engaging learning environment. The college focuses on relationships between all members of the school community through Restorative Practices.

Restorative Practice focuses on relationship development and uses frameworks, strategies and language with staff, students and families to promote a culture of respect that allows for restoration when managing injustice and hurt.

The philosophy of restorative justice encourages schools to shift their thinking from a traditional model of punishment to one of education, accountability and meaningful change. It provides schools with a set of guidelines to manage even the most confronting behaviours.

Restorative justice views wrong doing as a violation of people and relationships. When wrong doing occurs it is concerned with healing and repairing those individuals and their relationships. In this sense it strengthens feelings of caring, belonging and community among school members.

The restorative teacher views wrong doings as an opportunity for learning. They use methods that develop social and emotional knowledge and skills. They create safe environments by using processes that treat all participants fairly and with respect and dignity. Their discussions are concerned with reconnecting people and repairing relationships. They focus on the needs of everybody including the wrongdoer.

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Weeroona College Bendigo's Student Engagement Policy will focus on:

- creating a positive school culture that is fair and respectful
- building a safe and supportive school environment
- expecting positive, supportive and respectful relationships that value diversity
- promoting pro-social values and behaviours
- encouraging student participation and student voice
- proactively engaging with parents/carers
- implementing preventative and early intervention approaches
- responding to individual students
- links to the local community.

2.1 Principles

The Weeroona College Student Code Of Conduct Is Based On The Following Principles of Restorative Practice:

- **Foster awareness in the student** of how others have been affected.
- **Avoid scolding and lecturing.** This often results in the student reacting defensively. It distracts them from noticing other people's feelings.
- **Involve the student actively.** Instead of simply doling out punishment, which the student is expected to accept passively, in a restorative intervention, the student is asked to speak. They face and listen to those who have been affected by their inappropriate behaviour. They help decide how to repair the harm and make a commitment to this, therefore allowing the student to be held accountable.
- **Accept ambiguity.** Often fault is unclear and people can agree to accept the ambiguous situation.
- **Separate the deed from the doer.** We can recognise a student's worth, their virtues and accomplishments while disapproving of the behaviour.
- **See every instance of wrongdoing and conflict as an opportunity for learning.** Negative incidents can be used constructively to build empathy and a sense of community in the hope that there is a reduction of negative incidents in the future.
- Restorative practices must be systemic, not situational. Every attempt on an individual level to use these principles needs to be well supported by the broader system.

Weeroona College Bendigo acknowledges positive behaviour in a variety of ways and through various structured reward systems.

2.2 Whole-school strategies and programs to engage and motivate students.

As an effective school Weeroona College Bendigo will promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

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- articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
- adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absence
- following up student absences promptly and consistently
- implementing data-driven attendance improvement strategies
- creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning
- providing early identification of and supportive intervention for students at risk of non-attendance
- linking with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support
- providing a staged response

The Student Engagement Policy, the Student Engagement and Wellbeing goals and targets in the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plans provide the development of whole-school strategies that foster full student attendance and participation.

A whole-college approach to attendance identifies effective prevention and early intervention strategies as follows:

- Clearly written and verbal statements made regularly to parents/carers and students about school and community attendance expectations.
- Clearly articulated college based policies – School Community Wellbeing (Bullying & Harassment), eSmart, Pregnancy, Uniform and Anaphylaxis.
- Promoting awareness that student absences result in quantifiable lost learning time and opportunities.
- Whole-school modelling of punctuality.
- Delegation of responsibilities to all staff, with key members of staff leading attendance improvement initiatives.
- Regular discussions on student attendance in Learning Community meetings.
- Implementation of effective and supportive transition programs ,including student transitions between different learning areas and levels within the school, and pathways and careers support programs.
- Class and home group structures and environments that enable opportunities for increased connectedness to individual teachers and peers.
- Individual Personal Learning Plans.
- Provision of out-of-school programs, including breakfast, homework and sporting clubs.

Drug and Sexual Health Education

All students at Years 7 & 8 will have a dedicated Health subject for one semester each year. At years 9 & 10 a range of Health based electives are offered. Within these subjects, such as Physical Education, students will be presented with a range of opportunities to learn about relationships and ways in which conflict and peer pressure can be managed.

Wellbeing Days held at year level groups provide drug education to help inform students of factual information about a range of legal and illegal drugs as well as age appropriate harm minimisation strategies that they can use in a variety of situations. Wellbeing Days also cover sexual health education to help inform students of factual information about a range of sexual health and reproductive issues as well as age appropriate safe sex practices and understanding of strategies that they can use in a variety of situations.

Further access to help and support agencies within the community will also be provided.

3.0 Rights and responsibilities

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

Weeroona College Bendigo Rights & Responsibilities

Respect	The right to be treated with respect by everyone at WCB.	To treat fellow students and teachers with respect.
	The right to be safe.	To respect the personal safety of others.
	The right to express oneself appropriately.	To respect others points of view.
	The right to have your property respected.	To respect all personal and school property.
	The right to racial and cultural equality.	To respect racial and cultural diversity.
Integrity	The right to be treated in a fair and truthful manner without fear or favour.	To behave in a fair and truthful manner.
Personal Excellence	The right to achieve to the very best.	To try their hardest in all activities. To take risks to achieve new heights. To seek assistance when required. To allow others to work without interference.

3.1 Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

Under the act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:

- age
- breastfeeding
- gender identity
- impairment
- industrial activity

- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status or status as carer

- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation
- personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).

3.2 The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance web site.

3.3 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 a 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.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

4.0 Shared expectations

Shared Expectations are based on the premise that students achieve their best when students, parents/guardians and teachers work collaboratively and cooperatively together.

College

- Provide a safe, caring and supportive learning environment
- Be sensitive and responsive to parent/guardian or student concerns.
- Be respectful of all members of the College Community.
- Keep accurate attendance records and inform parents of unexplained absence promptly.
- Make parents/guardians aware of any concerns that they have about student performance & wellbeing.
- Develop Personal Learning Plans with students and parent/guardians.
- Provide reports that accurately reflect student progress and achievement.
- Celebrate and recognise student achievement
- Encourage students to take on new challenges.
- Keep parents/guardians regularly informed about College matters.

Parents/Guardians

- Encourage and support their child's learning.
- Support their child's home study by providing a place and quiet time.
- Ensure that their child has full College uniform at all times and has the required equipment for class.
- Ensure that their child attends College every day.
- Notify the College of reasons for absences promptly.
- Support the College's Student Code of Conduct.
- Inform the College of any factor which may impact on their child's development and school.
- Participate in parent/guardian-student-teacher interviews.
- Be respectful of all members of the College Community.
- Promote the College positively in the Community.

Students

- Attend all classes every day in uniform with the correct equipment.
- Aim to be the best you can.

- Support other students' achievements.
- Respect the rights of others in the College Community.
- Complete and submit all work for assessment.
- Seek assistance if needed.
- Treat others respectfully.
- Help to keep your school yard litter free.
- Switch mobile phones off whilst in class.
- Take home all notes.
- Report any harassment of yourself or others to staff.
- Take on new challenges as they arise.
- Represent the College in the broader community in such a way that the whole College Community is seen positively.
- Abide by the Student Code of Conduct.

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5. School actions and consequences

To help our students become more responsible for their behaviour, there are (related) consequences that follow when rules are not followed. In some cases the choice of the consequence will be at the discretion of the teacher depending upon severity and frequency of the misbehaviour.

Weeroona College Bendigo Learning Support Plan
See Attachment

5.1 Discipline procedures

Suspension and expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, Weeroona College Bendigo follows the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in **Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines**.

A student is only excluded from WCB 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.
- 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, that 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 will be informed of such withdrawals.

- Lunchtime Detention/Lunchtime Catch Up Class - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any lunchtime may be used for this work.
- After School Detention/After School Catch Up Class - students may be required to attend a 3.30am – 4.15pm session held weekly to complete school work or undertake tasks around the college. eg picking up of litter. Learning Community Leaders shall ensure that parents/carers are informed the week of the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of such a detention shall create undue hardship (for example, cost of travel),

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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).

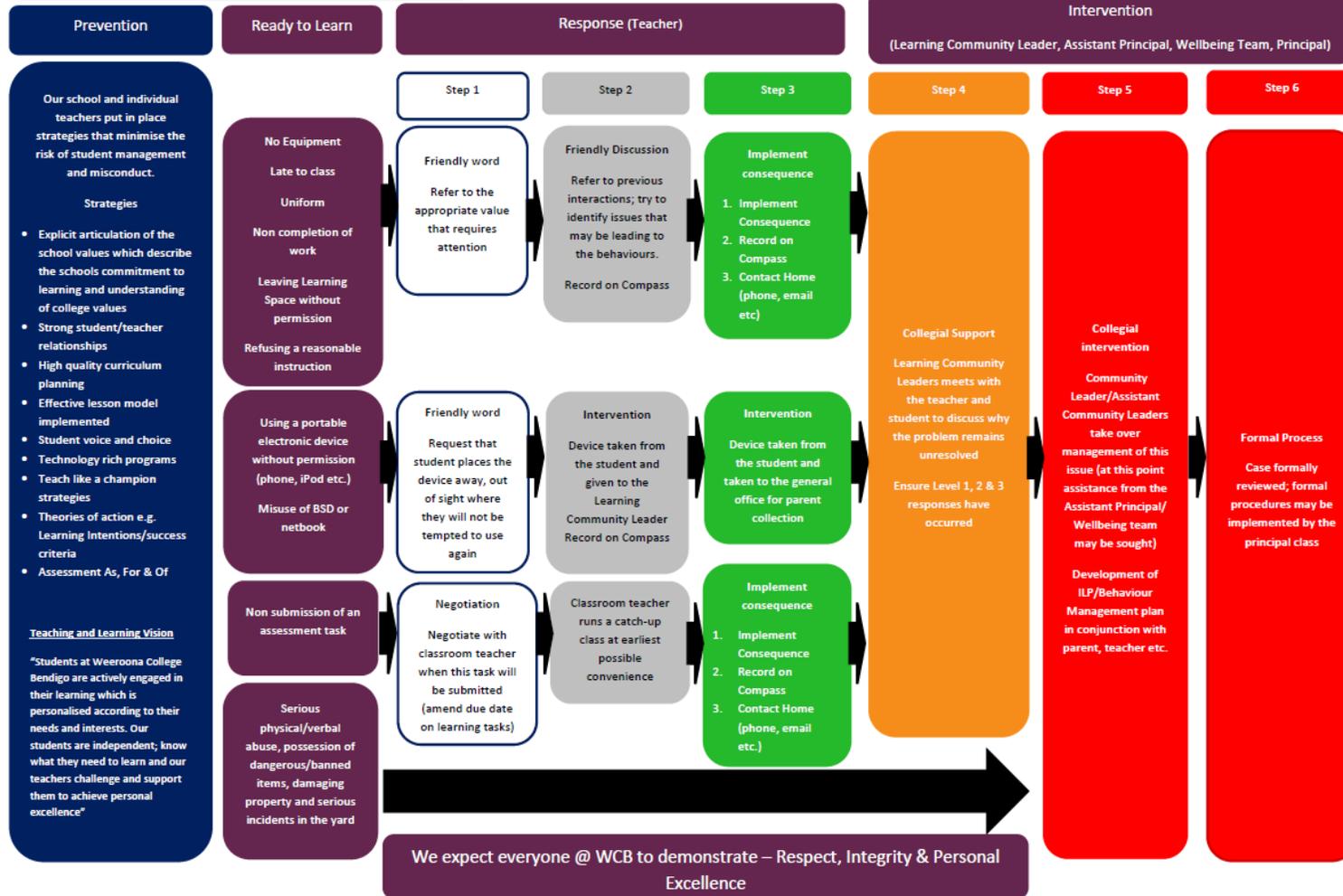
Weeroona College Bendigo prohibits the use of corporal punishment.

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Rationale: The purpose of this LSP is to be effective and consistent in the implementation of student learning. This plan will support effective student teacher relationships. Note: If student are repeating the same behaviours it is expected that appropriate escalation of LSP will be commenced i.e. it is not expected that the friendly word will continue every time the behaviour is exhibited

Learning Support Plan – Weeroona College Bendigo



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 3 | This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or as required.

References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
eSmart	https://www.esmartschools.org.au
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Guidelines for Victorian Schools	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf

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