



GEELONG HIGH SCHOOL

Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy 2024

This Policy has been reviewed and endorsed by the Principal:	April 2024
This Policies next review and endorsement is due in two years:	2026

PURPOSE

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

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

Geelong High School 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

Geelong High School was established in 1910 and was originally the only state government secondary school in Geelong.

Geelong High School enrolls students from up to 40 primary schools across the city and surrounding area. Enrolment is consistently above 940 students (max. 975).

Demographically and socio-economically the population is fairly diverse. The SFO is .4949 and SFOE of .4208 indicating the community is in the moderately low socio-economic quadrant.

The school understands that student wellbeing is at the centre of the Framework for School Improvement (FISO) and as such has a very strong focus on students' support and engagement. The school has employed two social workers, and a Mental Health Practitioner.

The school is a founding member of the Geelong Project an early intervention program to support student engagement and prevent homelessness. This program is now being implemented in many places around the world. All Wellbeing staff can be found in the wellbeing offices near the house teams.

Parents choose to send their children to Geelong High School because of its solid reputation and its calm and orderly school environment. The school has completed a major rebuild which commenced in 2017 and concluded in 2020.

The school utilizes the on-line management tool Compass as its main Student and Learning Management platform and means of communication both internally & externally. Communication through Compass is a key element. The school has also a Website and a Facebook account to supplement the existing Newsletter.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school's vision is that: Geelong High School is a positive and creative learning community that embraces its history and prepares students for life.

We are committed to:

- Developing caring and respectful relationships.
- Empowering people to realize their potential through effort, responsibility, and teamwork; and
- Building healthy, resilient and productive global citizens

Our values are:

Respect, Creativity, Positivity, Excellence, Effort, Responsibility and Teamwork

Geelong High School is the oldest government secondary school in the provincial city of Geelong.

3. Engagement strategies

Universal

The school has a strong focus on Positive Education. We are also committed to our vision and values, and this forms the basis of our engagement with our community. The school is organised into smaller communities through the House system. Each House has a leader who is a Leading Teacher and two Assistant House Leaders. The House is the first point of contact for anything related to a student including wellbeing, and learning. Parents/Carers build a positive and supportive relationship with the House Office, and this continues for the time that the student is enrolled at the school. The House ensures that all students are connected to their House and other members of the house.

The school has high expectations of all of its community and celebrates achievement and success.

The school values diversity and has students from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. We are part of the Safe Schools coalition and have a SLAY (Sexuality Learning and Youth) Group which meets regularly to support members of the LGBTI+ community.

The school values positive relationships between all of its members and utilise Restorative Justice practices where appropriate.

Positive Education and Respectful Relationships programs are integrated and delivered through the Home Group session. The school aims to create a positive and vibrant culture in which all students can be engaged and included.

The school welcomes parent/carer engagement and input and we ensure that all Koorie, EAL students have an Individual Education Plan and an SSG every term.

The school ensures that there is a broad range of subject offerings at Years 9 – 12 including VET and VCE. There is a focus on ensuring that all students have areas of study that grab their interest and motivate them.

An instructional model has been developed over a period of time which aims to engage and challenge students whilst at the same time allowing for differentiation to support students in their learning.

The school has a comprehensive Transition Program for incoming year seven students. The students come from around forty primary schools and there are generally around twenty students who are the only student from their primary schools. We also have a comprehensive program for students transitioning to the school with specific learning needs.

Student attendance is monitored by the House Office and is followed up as the need arises.

Student Leadership is valued and utilised in terms of providing feedback to the school and also developing new initiatives. This group meets with the Principal and they provide advice and guidance on a range of issues. The Student Representative Council works together to improve the culture and vibrancy in a positive manner.

Whole of school activities such as the School Production, Inter-House sports activities and House Meetings assist in building connections between students of different ages and year levels.

The school has a comprehensive range of student wellbeing and co-located support services including:

- ✓ Wellbeing Team
- ✓ Mental Health Practitioner
- ✓ The Geelong Project
- ✓ Doctors in Secondary Schools
- ✓ Bellarine Community Health

One of the Assistant Principals has a key leadership role overseeing student wellbeing and engagement.

We have many programs which are cross-age such as our Music Program, School Production and Debating.

We also provide an awareness program with our nurse and doctor associated with DiSS. The school's focus on community service also builds a sense of purpose and belonging in the school community.

A strong careers program for years 7 -12 ensures that students are future thinking and have an appropriate pathway.

Targeted

The following strategies are used to target support for individual students and their families.

- The House Office will initiate a targeted response for students needing support.
- Every student has a career action plan, and the Careers Advisor will work with students to assist in career planning.
- Students have a home group teacher who assists in monitoring.
- The school-based Wellbeing services are available for all families.
- The Wellbeing Team are well connected in the community sector and have multiple referral pathways for individuals requiring assistance.
- Koorie students are connected with the KESO and regular attendance reports are provided.
- Students in Out of Home Care have a Learning mentor and an Individual Education Plan developed in conjunction with the students, their carer and teachers.
- Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma.

Individual

The following responses are provided for individual students:

- Student Support Groups, see:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Disability Inclusion Team
- referral to Student Wellbeing Team and Student Support Services
- Referral to The Geelong Project
- Referral to Doctors in Secondary Schools
- referral to Child First,
- Referral to Headspace
- Referral to Navigator
- Support from SSS
- Referral to Jigsaw
- Referral to CAHMS

Geelong High School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
 - School-based wellbeing supports.
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First.
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student.
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- Referring to The Geelong Project
- 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

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

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

5. Student rights and responsibilities

Geelong High School believes that classrooms make the difference.

Each class will establish rules of behaviour. These will be in addition to the school wide rules. Two rules will be common to all classes:

1. Students have the right to a positive learning environment without distraction.
2. Students must come to class punctually and properly equipped ready to learn.

Rights:

Students have the **right** to be treated with consideration and respect.

Students have a **right** to a positive and orderly classroom environment.

Responsibilities:

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and considerate manner and not to interfere with their own learning, and the learning of others.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Geelong High School's Bullying policy.

Classroom Procedures:

- Students should not enter the classroom until instructed to by the classroom teacher.
- Teachers will close all classrooms at the end of every class.
- Students are not permitted to leave any classroom without the written permission of the classroom teacher. All students granted permission to leave the classroom during class time must have a signed note with them.

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour in class:

There is a hierarchy of consequences and a sequence of steps to follow in order to provide a supportive engaging learning environment where students have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

The response of teachers to inappropriate behaviour should move from a least intrusive to most intrusive intervention and the consequence should always be appropriate to the behaviour.

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure that the relationship with the student is always repaired as this provides the platform for future learning.

All steps and processes related to student behaviour should be entered on Compass to facilitate early intervention.

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:

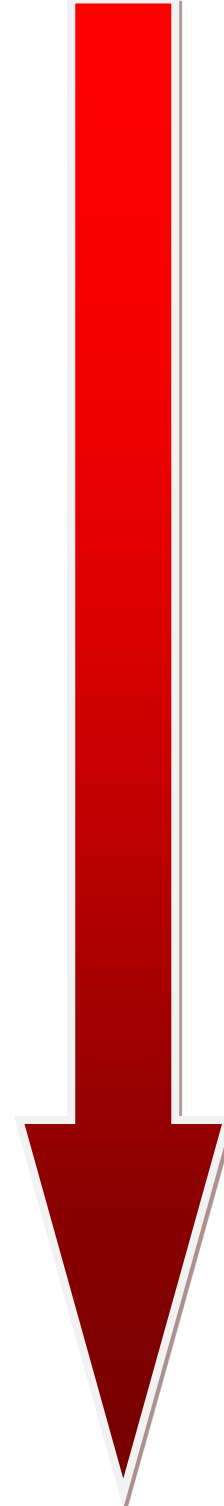
- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate.
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour.
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the House Office
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour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

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

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

Managing inappropriate behaviour in class:



	Warning	<p>This should involve a clear communication to students that their behaviour is inappropriate in that it is not in accord with agreed classroom behaviour.</p>
	Isolation within the classroom	<p>This need not be complete separation from all other students, but involves moving either the misbehaving student or other students so that the offender is in some way apart from others and under closer supervision. While the student's inappropriate behaviour is rejected, this step should not involve exclusion of the student from class activities.</p>
	Teacher controlled consequence.	<p>The teacher will impose an appropriate and reasonable consequence with the aim of reinforcing the type of behaviour that is appropriate. A student may, for example, be required to demonstrate acceptable behaviour before being permitted to complete a particular activity.</p>
	Withdrawal of privileges	<p>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. The student must be in a visible location outside the classroom. Students must only be outside the classroom for a short period of time before the teacher discusses their behaviour and they are returned into the classroom. Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.</p>
	Student Referral to House Office.	<p>When a student has displayed a consistent pattern of disruptive and uncooperative behaviour they may be removed from class and sent with another reliable student to report to a House Leader. The student's parents will be informed of this action. Formal school detention allocated.</p>
	Detention	<p>Detention should be given if the student has failed to respond to the actions of the teacher and should be recorded on Compass. Classroom teachers are encouraged to conduct their own detentions in the first instance. This should be communicated to House Leaders. Repeated inappropriate behaviour or significant breaches of behavioural expectations should be referred to House Leaders when formal detentions will be allocated.</p>
	Restorative Practice Referral	<p>The classroom teachers initiate a restorative process with the student to manage a change in behaviour. This step may or may not involve Home Group teacher / House Leaders.</p>
	Suspension and Expulsion	<p>When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DET guidelines published in Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines. Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and pro formas 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.</p>

7. Engaging with families

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

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

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

8. Evaluation

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

- Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:
- Student survey data
- Incidents data
- School reports
- Parent survey
- Case management
- CASES21
- SOCS
- IRIS reports data
- Attendance data

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Behaviour — Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)

[Safe Schools](#)

[Respectful Relationships](#)

<https://www.geelonghigh.vic.edu.au/about-us/policies>

- GHS Child Safe Standards Policy
- GHS Mandatory Reporting Child Safe
- GHS Student Attendance Policy