



Student Engagement Policy

St John's College takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of St John's College community understand:

- Our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students.
- Our school's vision, mission, values and our shared expectations for all members of our school community.
- Support available to students and families.
- Our policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

St John's 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. School profile

Motto

Forever Excelling

Strategic principles

The College operates under the auspices of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia (GOAOA). Therefore, the Hellenic and Orthodox Christian ethos, spirituality and tradition are the foundation of College life. They inform our conduct, our values and our curriculum choices. They are to be considered in all decision making at all levels of College life: Board, Principalship and College leadership. Our agreed 'Shared Expectations' help all members of our community to live our values every day; these expectations were developed by a consultation process over the course of 2020, are on display across our College and articulated in our 'Vision, Mission and Values' booklet.

Demographics/Social

The College is divided into two 'sub-schools' matched to the stages of learning.

- Junior School – Foundation to Year 6
- Senior School – Years 7 to 12

2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

St John's College Statement of Values and School Philosophy (Mission Vision and Values Booklet) is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community.

Our vision is to educate the whole person, academically, socially, spiritually and morally. Students leave the school with the knowledge, skill and confidence to

succeed in their chosen field; to 'walk the right path – Philotimo.'

Our mission is to foster a love of learning, live the Orthodox Christian values of love, kindness, responsibility and humility, and celebrate Hellenism, in a community environment where everyone is welcome.

Our Values

- Love
- Excel
- Achieve
- Dream

3. Engagement strategies

St John's 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. 2020 was the year of 'renewal.' We engaged in community wide consultation about the vision, mission and school values. The result of the work were new vision and mission statements (endorsed by the Board and His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia). Ideas from the community about how we live and enact our values everyday were encapsulated in two Shared Expectation matrices which are now confirmed and on display across all spaces at the College. The Shared Expectations articulate:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers;
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive;
- building positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing;
- 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 data, student feedback to teachers data and school level assessment data;

- provision of a learning management system SEQTA – accessible to students, staff and parents;
- delivering a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations;
- implementing agreed learning norms, a learner model and instructional frameworks to provide an explicit, common and shared models of instruction;
- ensuring that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons;
- adopting a 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 and the AITSL;
- incorporating our values into our curriculum and promoting them to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community;
- offering comprehensive transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling;
- monitoring student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level;
- acknowledging positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents;
- ensuring students are providing feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and student leadership groups;
- encouraging students to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns;
- creating opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs;

- offering targeted programs such as: eSmart, You Can Do It, Pastoral Care and Orthodoxy, Prep and Year 6 Buddy Program, Lunchtime Clubs, Interschool Sports Program, Student Leadership Program and extracurricular opportunities.

Targeted

- Each class has a pastoral care teacher who is the initial responder between home and school.
- Each sub-school has a head of school who is responsible for the wellbeing of students and acts as a secondary 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; year 10 students participate in work experience and RIJI programs.
- 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.

Individual

A range of strategies support and promote individual engagement are offered at St John's College including:

- Parent/teacher/student conferences are held termly for all students.
- Building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances.
- All students with additional learning needs and/or who are English As Additional Language have an individual learning plan (ILP). ILPs are developed via termly Student Support Group meetings.
- Students with low attendance are provided with attendance plans or absent from school learning plans.
- Students may be provided with safety plans if they have complex social needs (for example if they have been the victim or perpetrator of bullying and or if they are experiencing mental illness such as anxiety/depression).

- Safety net counselling is offered to students who are experiencing mental illness and waiting for private services and/or students with more complex social needs.
- Families with complex needs are supported to access Child First and/or connected with external agencies such as Headspace.
- Provision of safety net counselling.

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.
- Referring the student to external clinical services and/or 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.
- 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

St John's College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing and Child Safe team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. We 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,
- discussion and case management at Student Wellbeing and Child Safe committee meetings.

Safety Net Counselling Process:

1. Teachers must ensure all observations, discussion notes and parent observations regarding student health/wellbeing are entered into SEQTA.
2. Head of School monitors SEQTA.
3. Head of School presents students of concern at Student Wellbeing and Child Safe committee meeting for possible referral.
4. Principal approves referral.
5. Head of School speak to parent/carer and obtain signed permission for safety net counselling. Head of School concurrently suggests clinical referral for outside school support.
6. Referral forms are completed by the family for the counsellor.
7. Student enters waiting list.
8. Ongoing review regarding participation in counselling, student's wellbeing and access to outside clinical services.
9. Counsellor feedback to both parents and the school.

Note: The service provider keeps all case notes confidentially stored in an online forum: PowerDiary. Hard copies are shredded.

5. Student rights and responsibilities

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

Students have the right to:

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

Students have the responsibility to:

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

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

6. Student behavioural expectations

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

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, St John's College will institute a staged response, consistent with the school's Student Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to

ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

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

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with St John's College Statement of Values and School Philosophy and Exclusion from School policy.

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

7. Engaging with families

St John's 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 all parents/carers have access to SEQTA and that all information is available on SEQTA.
- 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

St John's 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.
- student achievement and learning progress data.
- case management information.
- student attendance data.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy (Vision Mission and Values booklet)
- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safe Standards

POLICY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Version	1
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Policy audience	Staff and Board
Ratification date	Na
Release date	March 2021
Review date	March 2025 (4 years)
Approval Authority (Executive Team/College Board)	Executive Team
Communication Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Induction and SharePoint, staff• Website, community