



BENTON JUNIOR COLLEGE

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



Aim

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.

Rationale

Benton Junior 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.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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1. School Profile Statement

Benton Junior College is a Victorian Government primary school located east of the Mornington township. The college opened in January 2003 with 183 children and approximately has 740 enrolled from families predominantly of English speaking background. The school is authorised with the International Baccalaureate Organisation - Primary Years Programme (PYP). Opportunities for children to achieve their academic and social potential are developed through a meaningful curriculum that connects with local and global communities. This is encapsulated in our mission statement: 'to motivate to learn; to teach to think; to encourage to imagine; and to show the compassion to care globally'.

Our school has a clear focus to improve student English and Mathematics achievements through a culture of collaboration and collective endeavour by all staff. Teachers worked in Year Level Teams to ensure a strong focus on students learning essential skills in English and Mathematics. Teachers plan collaboratively and use Common Formative Assessments to identify students' learning needs and personalise learning. There is a strong emphasis on explicit teaching and teams have developed 'I can' statements to enable students to identify their current learning and future learning goals. Our school has eight PLC Leaders, supported by two PLC link School Leaders and all staff actively participate with our PLC network collegiate schools.

Students are provided opportunity to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities which enhance and support our classroom programs. PAL (Peninsula Accelerated Learning), Instrumental Music, Performing and Visual Arts, ICT, Sport and Camping programs extend student learning opportunities. The school is architecturally designed featuring inter-connected open classrooms. The gymnasium provides a wonderful facility for PE and compliments our extensive sports grounds, basketball courts and playgrounds. Specialist classrooms for ICT, STEAM, Japanese, Art and Performing Arts also enrich students' experiences. Our school offers a welcoming, safe and stimulating learning environment for all children. Out of School Hours Care for school families is provided through our partnership with Team Kids.

As our enrolments have grown, the school has continued to nurture a calm, purposeful and respectful environment. Classrooms are well equipped, pleasant and welcoming. Student attendance records remain above the mean for other Victorian government schools. Staff maintain accurate records of attendance data and collaborate with parents to plan and address broader issues affecting a child's school attendance, including those children who arrive late to school in the morning.

Our transition and orientation programs support students to make a comfortable and positive transition to their new teachers and learning environment. Welcome cards/certificates and a buddy system for new students who commence throughout the year supports their integration into the school, together with parent class coordinators who assist the integration of new parents into our school community.

Student Engagement policies, Child Safe policies and whole-school behaviour management strategies continue to maintain and promote a consistent and positive approach to respond to the behavioural needs of our children. Children are guided effectively by staff and our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) approach to make considered and responsible choices that demonstrate *we are learners, we are respectful, we are safe, we are resilient*.

Partnerships between parents and staff are valued. Parents are actively involved in College Council, classroom programs, excursions, camps, student-led conferences, fundraising and school community events and celebrations.

Student wellbeing and engagement are a priority whereby staff collaborate with parents to use various information to identify the wellbeing and engagement needs of children. Student needs are identified and monitored through the use of data including Student, Staff and Parent Opinion surveys, Shire Council and community feedback data, feedback from Benton Voice, evaluation of behaviour management records, evaluation of college programs, parent/child/teacher interviews or conferences, observation and self-reports.

The College Council and leadership team regularly consult with children, parents/carers, support agencies and the broader community to ensure we are responsive to children's social, emotional, cognitive and cultural needs.

2. School Values and Philosophy

Benton Junior College is committed to developing and nurturing a community of life-long learners. We support the development of the whole person; a person with a positive self-image, who seeks excellence and respects the rights of others. Our intention is to make learning relevant and meaningful to children. Our focus is on children as capable individuals and as active constructors of their own learning. We aim to instil children with the motivation to learn, the ability to think, the courage to imagine and the compassion to care.

Benton Junior College develops the individual talents of children and encourages them to relate the experience of the classroom to the realities of the world outside. Beyond intellectual rigour and high academic standards, strong emphasis is placed on the ideals of international understanding and responsible citizenship. Our children are nurtured to become critical and compassionate thinkers, lifelong learners and informed participants in local and world affairs, conscious of the shared humanity that binds all people together while respecting the variety of cultures and attitudes that makes for the richness of life.

PYP Learner Profile

Benton Junior College children are:

Inquirers: They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable: They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers: They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled: They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded: They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment and responsibility to have a positive influence on themselves, the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers: They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced: They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective: They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

3. Engagement Strategies

Benton Junior 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.

Whole school strategies to promote positive behaviour and inclusion include:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing

- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- 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 Opinion Survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Benton Junior College use a Mathematics and Reading instructional model 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 Benton Junior 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 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
- 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 Benton Voice and other forums including Year Level Planning meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Principal Team and Student Wellbeing Leading Teacher whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the buddy program and buddy classes as well as special event days such as House Spirit Day.
- we engage in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) with our staff, students, and parents/carers through the collaborative development of the Benton Junior College Behaviour Matrix, which is supported by the seven essential features of common philosophy & purpose, leadership, clarifying expected behaviours, teaching expected behaviours, acknowledging expected behaviour, discouraging inappropriate behaviour, and ongoing monitoring.
 - Circle Time
 - Highway Heroes

Student Specific strategies include:

- Individual Education Plan and Behaviour Support Plan
- Disability Inclusion Program (Tier1, Tier 2 & Tier 3 – formally PSD)
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Inclusion & Engagement Leader, School based Speech Pathologist and Social Worker, and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace, Oz child, Shine Assist or other external organisations

Benton Junior 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
- developing an Individual Education 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 ChildFirst

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 or learning difficulty
 - in Out of Home Care
 - Koorie students
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Benton Junior College 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. Benton Junior 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
- 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 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 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, Anti-bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy. An Outline of student's expectations is also found in the BJC SWPBS Matrix.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Benton Junior College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. 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 PLC Team Leader
- referral to Student Wellbeing Leading Teacher or principal team
- 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.

7. Engaging with families

Benton Junior 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 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 education plans for students

8. Evaluation

Benton Junior 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 Attitudes to School survey
- incidents data
- school reports
- Parent Opinion Survey
- Attendance

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- BJC Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- BJC Anti-bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy
- BJC Child Safety Policy
- BJC Behaviour Management Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 20225