

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.

Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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

Rubicon Outdoor Centre is an outdoor secondary school operated by the Department of Education of Training (DET).

Rubicon delivers Victorian Curriculum-based educational programs to Victorian government schools. Teaching and learning occurs primarily in outdoor spaces, both onsite at the campuses and offsite. The outdoor spaces provide a teaching environment that enables high levels of student engagement and authentic learning experiences.

A strong focus on modelling sustainable and well-being practices and strategies are foundational to student learning as well as empowering students to develop beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours that will lead to life-long positive growth. Students achieve success through a customised learning journey within a small community, living in a healthy, happy, and safe environment.

Rubicon operates as an integral component of DET and shares across its students, staff, councillors and community, the cultures of Mutual Respect, Attentive Listening, Appreciations, and the Right to Pass.

Rubicon comprises two campuses: Thornton Campus is located in the picturesque Rubicon Valley approximately 100 km north-east of Melbourne, on the edge of the Great Dividing Range. The Nayook Campus, located near Neerim Junction at the foot of Mt Baw Baw, is approximately 100 km east of Melbourne in a bush setting.

Rubicon is a member of the Residential Outdoor Schools Association (ROSA). Comprising seven campuses across the state, ROSA schools work to provide affordable, high-quality educational programs Victorian state government school students.

School values, philosophy and vision

Our Statement of Values is available [online](#)

Engagement strategies

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

Universal

- *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, student management data and school level assessment data*
- *deliver 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*
- *teachers at Rubicon Outdoor Centre use DET Pedagogical Model as an instructional 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 Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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 school council involvement (when attendance coincides with school council meetings), feedback documentation and debriefing sessions with Campus Principals or Principal*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Group Teachers, Assistant Principal 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*
 - *Safe Schools*
- *programs, incursions and excursions are developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)*

Targeted

- *each group has a Group teacher who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their care, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *If required connect Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will utilise their existing Individual Learning Plan and where possible, be accompanied by their learning mentor on program. Students will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment through their home school as required.*
- *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*
- *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*

Individual

- *Student Support Groups, see:*
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- *Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan (to be supplied by visiting school and modified for our setting)*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*

- *Lookout*

Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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 venue or learning area*
- *referring the student, through their home school, 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 Navigator*

Where necessary the Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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*
- *running a Student Support Group meetings if required for all students:*
 - *with a disability*
 - *in Out of Home Care*
 - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

2. Identifying students in need of support

Rubicon Outdoor Centre is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing Coordinator plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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 during pre-program time*
- *attendance records*
- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
- *engagement with families*
- *self-referrals or referrals from peers*

3. 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.

4. 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 Rubicon Outdoor Centre's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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 Campus Principal*
- *restorative practices*
- *behaviour reviews*

- *Removed from program*

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.

5. Engaging with families

Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- 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.

6. Evaluation

Rubicon Outdoor Centre 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
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Bullying Prevention*
- *Child Safe Standards*

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 13/9/18 and is scheduled for review in September 2020

Implementation guide

<p>Is it compulsory for all Victorian government schools to have a policy addressing this issue?</p>	<p>Yes, a school policy addressing this issue is required by the Minimum Standards for school registration and by Regulation 23 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017.</p>
<p>Does this policy have to be approved by school council?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Recommended consultation</p>	<p>Regulation 23 of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 states that principals should develop the school's Student Engagement policy in consultation with the wider school community including school leaders, teachers, students and parents. School council should therefore be consulted and its views should be taken into account when you adopt this policy. Specifically there are sections in the template that are marked in yellow which need to be tailored to your school community.</p>
<p>What is the basis of this policy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reg 23, Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic) • Minimum Standards for school registration • School Policy and Advisory Guide: Student Engagement • Common law duty of care
<p>Recommended review cycle</p>	<p>1-2 years</p>