



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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.

Cobden Technical 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, where student participation is encouraged and valued, 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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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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POLICY

1. School profile

Cobden Technical School serves the town of Cobden and its surrounding dairy farming district. Cobden is located 200kms south west of Melbourne and 50kms from the Great Ocean Road, one of the world's most scenic coastal drives. The LGA is Corangamite Shire.

Cobden Technical School, established in 1969, is the only school in Victoria to have retained the name 'Technical' from an earlier time when there was a separate Technical Schools Division within the Department of Education. The continuation of the name was the wish of the local community, with whom the school continues to enjoy a positive and mutually supportive relationship. Cobden Technical School has been extremely innovative in resourcing its comprehensive, student-centred curriculum. Through the recruitment and training of teachers directly from the world of

commerce and industry, the school delivers Year 7-12 courses, culminating in a broad range of subjects within the VCE, VET and VCE VM pathways.

Cobden Technical School is the lead-school in the Corangamite Trade Training Cluster. A \$2.5m investment to upgrade the facilities and equipment for the Automotive, Building and Construction, and Electro-Technology subjects has further enhanced the substantial vocational opportunities already offered by the school. Building works valued at \$6.6 million will commence in 2025 to build a new administration centre, library and student amenities. This will add to the existing facilities of a double gymnasium, outdoor synthetic courts, food technology centre, BER science centre, a sports oval, and expansive grounds including a Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden. The school also underwent a significant accessibility upgrade during 2019.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Cobden Technical School's ethos is reflected in the initials 'CTS – Committed to Students... Committed to Success.' We are committed to developing successful outcomes for students, whether in the pursuit of high-level academic achievement or the development of specific vocational skills. These, along with opportunities for sporting, cultural, environmental and artistic involvement, are able to develop in a school with clear, strong connections to the community and industry at both the local and regional level.

Cobden Technical School prides itself on understanding and acknowledging that its students, staff and community are its greatest strength and resource. The strong relationships that exist within the school itself and between the school and the wider community have led to wonderful outcomes for many young people.

Cobden Technical School is a place where everyone who wants to learn is welcome and encouraged to strive for success while appreciating that lifelong learning is enjoyable. We strongly believe that the development of emotional and intellectual intelligence, coupled with an environment where learning is enjoyable, are central to the development of our core values.

Cobden Technical School's values are represented by the HEART acronym – Honesty, Excellence, Accountability, Respect and Teamwork.

Through these values, we promote a climate of building respectful relationships, respecting oneself and others, and taking responsibility for one's actions. Through these values, we support and affirm the principles of Australian democracy, including (i) elected Government; (ii) the rule of law; (iii) equal rights for all before the law; (iv) freedom of religion; (v) freedom of speech and association; (vi) the values of openness and tolerance.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Cobden Technical School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. 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 and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued*
- *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 survey data, student management data such as Pivot and school level assessment data*
- *deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCE VM to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers use the CTS instructional framework to implement an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
- *teachers at CTS 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 and School Philosophy 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 the Student Voice Committee and other forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Mentors, Sub School Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through sports events, music programs and camps*
- *all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Mentors, Sub Sschool Leaders, 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 (SWPBS) with our staff and students,*
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour such as Safe Schools, Respectful Relationships and Bully Stoppers*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. recess and lunchtime activities)*

- *measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.*

Targeted

- *each year group has a Mentor, a teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support checking in with the class each morning*
- *Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture supported by Marrung Inclusion Leader. Consultation with families, Student Support Groups, Individual Education Plans and Koorie Reference Groups will be implemented.*
- *our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program in the EAL Cluster and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school*
- *we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Student Support*
- *all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans*
- *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*
- *students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: International Student Program*
- *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*
- *Cobden Technical School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan*

Individual

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plans
- Behaviour - Students
- Behaviour Support Plans
- Student Support Services

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- Program for Students with Disabilities
- Mental health toolkit
- headspace
- Navigator
- LOOKOUT

Cobden Technical 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*
- *supporting and engaging students through programs such as Music Therapy and Art Therapy*
- *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 (CAMHS) or ChildFirst*
 - *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*
- *engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
 - *with a disability*
 - *in Out of Home Care*
 - *with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Cobden Technical 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. We 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*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation recorded on our student management system Compass*
- *attendance records*
- *academic performance*
- *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, racism, 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Values represented by the HEART acronym – Honesty, Excellence, Accountability, Respect and Teamwork. The expected behaviours are outlined on the Cobden Technical School Behaviour Matrix.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Cobden Technical School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Staff will follow the Cobden Technical School Minor and Major Behaviour Management Process 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. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Minor Behaviours include Avoiding learning activities, disrespectful language, disrupting or distracting others, failure to follow reasonable instructions, inappropriate use of technology, interfering with or damaging property, late to class, mistreatment of peers, not prepared with all requirements for the class.

Staff will remind, reteach, provide choice, re-engage, reinforce, hold restorative conversations and record on Compass.

Major Behaviours include: Repeated instances of Minor Behaviour, Verbal abuse or targeted swearing, Physical aggression, Physical violence, Sexual harassment, Causing significant property damage and Leaving school ground without permission

Staff will refer Major Behaviour to leadership and wellbeing staff to support and manage. Strategies include and management will include:

- *De-escalation strategies, alternative supervision of student, restorative conversations, logical consequences , support of transition back to class process, supporting class teacher with restorative conversation prior to student returning to class, respond to Major Behaviour post on Compass, contact home.*

Please see attached appendix for further resources.

Further management strategies may include:

- *behaviour support and intervention meetings*
- *withdrawal from activities or events*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

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

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Cobden Technical School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

Cobden Technical 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- inviting families to school assemblies and other events such as year level lunches and celebration
- 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

Cobden Technical 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 such as Student Attitudes to School Survey
- school reports
- parent surveys
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Cobden Technical School will regularly monitor available data dashboards including Student Compass Chronicles to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL






Policy last reviewed	February 2025
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2027

Cobden Technical School's Values – Represented by the HEART acronym

H		HONESTY	Integrity and trustworthiness
E		EXCELLENCE	Doing one's best to develop competence and credibility
A		ACCOUNTABILITY	Setting goals and being responsible for one's actions
R		RESPECT	Fairness and equity, understanding and tolerance and inclusion
T		TEAMWORK	Collaborating to achieve common goals

Cobden Technical School's Expected Behaviours

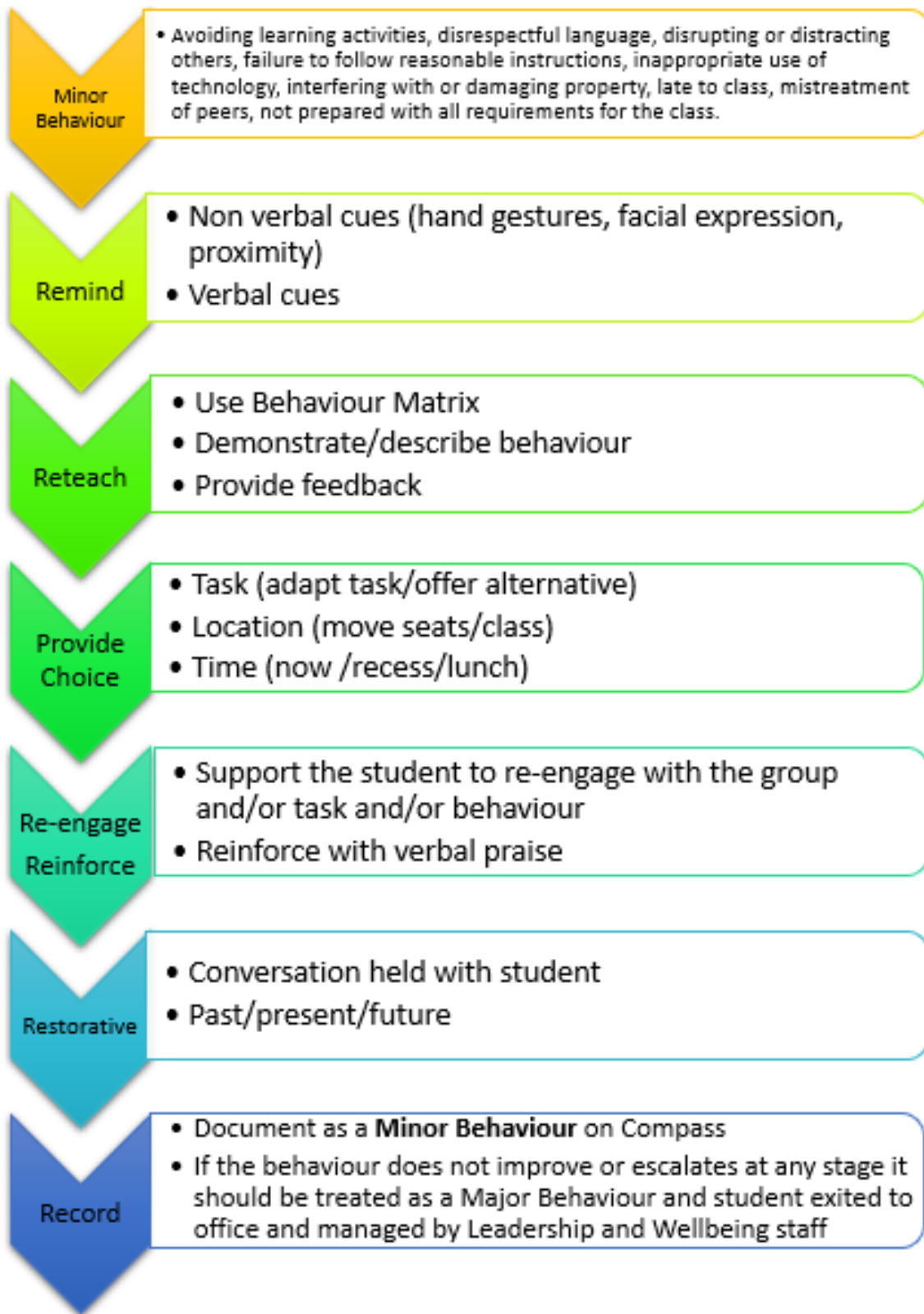
Cobden Technical School Behaviour Matrix

	AT ALL TIMES	IN LEARNING SPACES	IN SCHOOL GROUNDS	WITH ICT	IN THE COMMUNITY
 HONESTY	We take responsibility for our behaviours	We seek and use feedback to improve	We call out and report bullying	We report misuse of devices	We take responsibility for our behaviours
 EXCELLENCE	We represent our school and wear our uniform with pride	We attempt all learning tasks and always strive to do our best	We use our break times appropriately	We use technology for learning	We represent our school and wear our uniform with pride
 ACCOUNTABILITY	We act safely and treat all places and property with care	We arrive on time, prepared and ready to learn	We are SunSmart in Term 1 and Term 4 We stay undercover in wet weather	We take responsibility for our devices and treat it with care	We attend and actively participate in all events
 RESPECT	We speak, listen and behave politely to everyone	We respect other people and their personal space	We are considerate and inclusive of others	We communicate online respectfully	We are respectful of community representatives and school visitors
 TEAMWORK	We care for ourselves and other through positive choices	We support and encourage each other's learning	We follow instructions and work cooperatively with staff and students	We care for ourselves and others through positive choices	We demonstrate good sportsmanship and community spirit

The values of Cobden Technical School are based on the HEART acronym:
Honesty, Excellence, Accountability, Respect and Teamwork.



MINOR BEHAVIOUR (Managed by Classroom Teacher)



MAJOR BEHAVIOUR (Managed by Leadership/Wellbeing)

Major Behaviour

- Repeated instances of Minor Behaviour
- Verbal abuse or targeted swearing
- Physical aggression
- Physical violence
- Sexual harassment
- Causing significant property damage
- Leaving school ground without permission

Class Teacher Responsibilities

- Call the office to let them know a student has exited OR
- Notify the office if you require support to manage major behaviour OR
- Send another student to the office if you do not have ready phone access
- Ensure student has work to complete if they have exited
- **Do not leave your class unattended**

Leadership and Wellbeing Staff Responsibilities

- De-escalation strategies
- Supervise student
- Review incident with restorative conversation when student is calm
- Determine logical consequences and follow through when appropriate
- Determine transition back to class process
- Support class teacher with restorative conversation prior to student returning to class.
- Respond to Major Behaviour post on Compass and contact home
- Resolve Compass post and make visible to parent