

## STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2025
Consultation	School Council, student representatives and school staff were consulted in June 2025. The school community is also able to access the policy via our website and provide feedback.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2027



#### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the JMSS Office: (03) 9905 1002 or [john.monash.ss@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:john.monash.ss@education.vic.gov.au)

### 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.

John Monash Science 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
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
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## POLICY

### 1. School profile

John Monash Science School was established in 2010 and is located on the grounds of Monash University, Clayton. We have 660 students enrolled from Years 10 to 12 who were selected after analysis of written assessments, activities and interviews. As of June 2025, the School has a staffing Full-Time Equivalent of 68.22, comprising 3 Principal Class Officers, 43.09 teachers and 22.13 Education Support Officers.

Most students tend not to live locally and we attract students from over 100 schools across the state. John Monash Science School has developed close ties to Monash University and, as a result, our students get exclusive access to some of the University's services and expertise.

We actively encourage student leadership and student-lead initiatives which sees our student leaders driving many of the school's key events, such as Harmony Day, Battle of the Bands, Lip-Sync and many other House Competitions. Student voice also allows interest groups and clubs to form, such as Chess, Plastic Oceans, Queer Club and many more.

### 2. School values, philosophy and vision

The vision of John Monash Science School is to become a nationally and internationally recognised centre of excellence and innovation in the education of young people in the later years of secondary science, mathematics and associated technologies, reflecting global directions and priorities in scientific research and knowledge creation.

The mission of John Monash Science School is to holistically educate each student in our care, by developing in each the skills and attributes associated with leadership, initiative and thoughtful perspective.

The Values of John Monash Science School are inherent in UNESCO's Four Pillars of Education - Learning to Know, Learning to Be, Learning to Do and Learning to Live Together. These pillars underpin our curriculum at all levels, from yearly overviews to unit and lesson plans. They help guide the purpose of our teaching and learning programs and ensure a consistent focus on building each of these attributes in our students. All learning is designed to develop these values alongside the skills and knowledge taught in each subject.

Our John Monash Science School Diploma was developed and awarded for the first time to the Year 12 class of 2016. It enables students to gain recognition for their development in and contribution to both JMSS and the wider community in terms of leadership, service, sport and cultural activities. Students earn points for their involvement and success in all endeavours at JMSS which are categorised under one of our Four Pillars of Education. This has become the main vehicle through which JMSS enables our students to develop the skills and attributes they will need to make a positive difference to the world post secondary education.

### 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

John Monash Science 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 and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad and enriching Year 10 Science curriculum to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at John Monash Science School use the phased learning structure 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 John Monash Science School 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 Parliament and other forums including year group meetings and Focus Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Mentor, House Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through the House system and events, sport carnivals, music programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Team, House Leader, 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 maintain an open-door approach that encourages respectful dialogue between students and staff.

- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs and frameworks such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - UNESCO's four pillars of learning
  - Positive Education
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. consent, procrastination, etc.)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- 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 student is assigned to a Mentor Group, where they remain for the duration whilst at John Monash Science School. This group is a vertical structure to allow for students of all year levels to support each other. The Mentor is the main point of contact between school and home and monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their Mentor Group, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Year Level Assemblies are held when required to deliver specific information to the relevant students
- 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
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, 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 \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)
- 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
- John Monash Science School 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 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
- 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

- John Monash Science School assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan.

### Individual

John Monash Science School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure each student's intellectual, emotional and social needs are supported and developed. To do so, we utilise many DET policies and programs.

Department's Policy and Advisory Library such as:

- [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](#)

John Monash Science 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 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**

John Monash Science 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. John Monash Science 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 data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers/staff

#### **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 Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination is taken very seriously and will be managed in accordance with John Monash Science School's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, John Monash Science School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

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 Leader
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- 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 John Monash Science 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.

Below is the school's Student Code of Conduct framework;



JOHN  
MONASH  
SCIENCE SCHOOL

## STUDENT CODE OF PRACTICE

### LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER

#### IS ACHIEVED THROUGH

##### RESPECT FOR SELF

- ☞ Take responsibility for own learning
- ☞ Work towards reaching your potential
- ☞ Be responsible for your own actions
- ☞ Follow agreed classroom and school wide norms
- ☞ Promote safety
- ☞ Display compassion and honesty
- ☞ Be punctual and attend school regularly
- ☞ Take pride in personal appearance by wearing the correct school uniform
- ☞ Embrace a healthy lifestyle

##### RESPECT FOR OTHERS

- ☞ Listen to and respect the opinion of others
- ☞ Be considerate of others and demonstrate tolerance
- ☞ Celebrate/acknowledge the efforts of others
- ☞ Maintain positive relationships with those in the school community
- ☞ Recognise and understand that any form of bullying or harassment is not tolerated by the school community
- ☞ Respect the right of others to be safe
- ☞ Respect the property of others

##### RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- ☞ Help to ensure a safe environment for the school community
- ☞ Help maintain a pleasant, clean and hygienic environment for the school community
- ☞ Respect school property
- ☞ The community to embrace sustainability of the environment by reducing, reusing and recycling

**RESULTING IN A COMMUNITY  
WHICH IS SAFE, POSITIVE AND  
PROMOTES BELONGING FOR ALL ITS MEMBERS**

## 7. Engaging with families

John Monash Science 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.
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

John Monash Science 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

John Monash Science School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards 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 the [School Policy site](#)
- Included in staff induction processes and annual staff training
- Included in volunteer induction processes and training for relevant volunteers
- Discussed at staff briefings or meetings
- Included in staff handbook or manual
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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 Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy