



Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 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.

1.2 Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential 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.

1.3 Our College is also committed to preventing and addressing bullying, including cyberbullying. Please see our Bullying Prevention Policy for more information.

1.4 The College sets goals and targets relating to student wellbeing and engagement which can be found in the strategic plan and annual implementation plan.

1.5 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 and Student Wellbeing Framework.

2. Engagement Strategies

2.1 Whole School

2.1.1 The College actively seeks to engage with parents and the community to ensure a positive and inclusive school culture in which every student has the opportunity to succeed. The College works collaboratively with students and parents/guardians to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy, school wide Positive Behaviour Support framework and the Personal and Social capability in the Victorian Curriculum. There are also intervention strategies and supports in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

2.1.2 The College offers a broad curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular programs to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their strengths, aspirations and interests. School wide events are held throughout the year to promote engagement and a sense of community. The school incorporates specific programs into the curriculum to promote positive behaviours, inclusion and positive wellbeing including the Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships program and Bully Stoppers program.

2.1.3 Teachers at our school use an evidence based instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction and high impact teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons. This provides consistency and predictability for all students across the college.



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2.1.4 The College appreciates its diverse student and parent population, and has measures in place to ensure all students enjoy the same level of access to the school's curriculum and co-curricular programs. Our teaching and learning philosophy is important in engaging and challenging all students in their academic learning. Our Literacy and Numeracy Support programs and provision of EAL classes provide students with additional classroom support to ensure student literacy and numeracy needs are being addressed. High achieving students are offered opportunities for acceleration.

2.1.5 Positive behaviours and students' efforts and achievements are acknowledged and celebrated. Student voice and agency is embedded across the college using a range of methods including the student representative council, teacher feedback surveys, Attitudes to School survey, Resilient Youth Australia survey and representation on school committees and school council. Student leadership capacity is fostered through the Student Representative Council and the role of the school captains and vice captains at each campus.

2.1.6 Our Student Wellbeing Team is available to support students with personal and social learning issues at various stages of their secondary education. Students also have access to allied health services within the South West Region. Our Learning Support program provides vital assistance and support to students with special needs in and out of the classroom.

2.1.7 The College values parent/guardian input into its operations and seeks feedback through the Parent Opinion survey, and from parent representatives on School Council. The College supports families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We provide an environment that welcomes all parents/guardians and are responsive to them as partners in learning. Information evenings, parent teacher interviews and school events are held throughout the year to increase the involvement of parents/guardians. Staff communicate directly with parents/guardians where there are specific student concerns. The school communicates to parents/guardians through the use of the Compass parent portal, social media platforms, the school website and regular newsletters. School newsletters are provided in other languages to parents of EAL/refugee students. The College also uses interpreters where required to assist parents/guardians to engage in the learning and progress of their child. This also enhances our capacity for effective decision making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs.

2.1.8 The College places an emphasis on 100% attendance, and has in place attendance targets. Attendance is monitored throughout the day, and student absences are followed up by our Home Group teachers, Year Level Coordinators and Attendance Officer.

2.1.9 Various types of data are collected regularly and analysed to measure student wellbeing, engagement and academic outcomes, and to inform school-based strategies, procedures and goals. Some sources of data used are:

- Student Attitudes to School Survey
- School level report data
- Parent Opinion Survey
- NAPLAN and Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) data
- Teacher Judgements



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- Resilient Youth Australia survey data
- VCE data
- Data from case management work with students
- Data extracted from software such as CASES21.

2.2 Targeted

2.2.1 Each home group has a Home Group Teacher who establishes relationships with their students and monitors their health and wellbeing. The Home Group Teacher acts as a point of contact for parents/guardians and for students who may need additional support.

2.2.2 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.

2.2.3 Our English as a second language (EAL) 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 extra tutoring to support the learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from EAL and refugee backgrounds.

2.2.4 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. Our school participates in the Safe Schools program to promote student inclusion and student voice and agency.

2.2.5 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 having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG), and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment as required.

2.2.6 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 Disability Inclusion, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual learning plans.

2.2.7 Our school has a large cohort of Islander Pasifika students and has a Pasifika Engagement Program in place to support these students' engagement, retention and pathways after secondary school. The program promotes the voice and agency of Pasifika families in the school community and helps staff to have an understanding of and appreciation for the Islander and Pasifika cultures.

2.2.8 Students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines.

2.2.9 All students in Year 9 and above are assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future.



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2.3 Individual

2.3.1 The College employs various strategies to support attendance and engagement of individual students including:

- Meet with the student and their parent/guardian to talk about how best to help the student engage or re-engage with school
- Establish a Student Support Group
- Seek extra resources under the Disability Inclusion program for eligible students
- Develop an Individual Learning Plan in consultation with teachers for any student requiring assistance
- Develop a Behaviour Support Plan or Attendance Improvement Plan where required
- Make appropriate environmental changes for students with a visual or hearing impairment
- Refer to Student Wellbeing Team for additional support
- Refer to external support agencies including local government, family and youth organisations
- Refer to the Doctors in Schools program on site
- Support students in the criminal youth justice system via the Department's Education Justice Initiative
- Provide a payment plan and/or assistance with educational expenses for families in financial hardship
- Identify alternative school settings and flexible learning options appropriate to the student's needs
- Refer the student to Navigator for intensive case management to support re-engagement with school.

2.3.2 Where necessary, and with the support of the student and their family, the school will collaborate with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student.

2.3.3 Students who wish to talk to someone about their feelings or concerns should speak to a trusted member of staff at school.

3. Identifying Students in Need of Support

3.1 Our school is committed to providing the necessary supports 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 across the college. Our 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, detention and suspension data
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- engagement with families and referrals from parents/carers
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- referrals from external support agencies.

4. Rights and Responsibilities

4.1 It is the right of all members of the college community to experience a safe, pleasant and supportive learning and teaching environment. Staff, students and parents/guardians have a right to be treated with



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respect, and enjoy an environment free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation.

4.2 Teachers also have the right to be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on their teaching and learning for that student.

4.3 Students have a responsibility to contribute positively to the educational experience for themselves and other students through student voice, agency and leadership, to participate fully in the school’s educational program, and to ensure that their behaviours demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.

4.4 Parents/guardians have a responsibility to take an active interest in their child’s educational progress, model and reinforce positive behaviours and ensure their child’s regular attendance. They have a responsibility to support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students, and engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning and behaviour.

4.5 Teachers have a responsibility to demonstrate the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching. That is, to know how students learn and how to teach them effectively, know the content they teach, know their students, plan and assess for effective learning, create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments, differentiate the work to meet the needs of their students and use a range of strategies to engage students in effective learning. Teachers also have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement school policies.

4.6 All members have an obligation to ensure school property is appropriately used and maintained.

5. Shared Expectations

	Students	Parents/Guardians	Principals/Teachers & Staff
Engagement (participation in the classroom and other school activities)	Demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparedness to engage in and take full advantage of the school program • effort to do their very best • self-discipline to ensure a cooperative learning environment and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive outcomes by valuing the importance of education and liaising with the school on their child’s progress/needs • Support their child in their preparedness for the school day and in the provision of a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will comply with its duty of care obligations and have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that can effectively engage all students • The school will provide appropriate, relevant, engaging and challenging curriculum

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	<p>model the school values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • team work – collaborate and co-operate 	<p>supportive home environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor their child’s school involvement and progress and communicate with the school when necessary • Are informed and supportive of school programs 	<p>that gives students the opportunity to have input into their learning and experience success</p>
Attendance	<p>All students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend and be punctual for all timetabled classes every day • be prepared to participate fully in lessons • have a note in their planner from their parents/guardians explaining an absence/lateness 	<p>Parents/Guardians are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that enrolment details are correct • ensure their child attends regularly • advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent • account for all student absences • keep family holidays within scheduled school holidays • Support their child’s learning during absences and work with the school to reintegrate students after prolonged absences 	<p>In accordance with Dept procedures the school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively promote regular attendance • mark rolls accurately each lesson and follow up on absences • Identify trends via data analysis • Report attendance data in the school’s Annual Report • Support students whose attendance is problematic by developing ‘Return to School’ plans and working with families to implement individual strategies
Behaviour	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take responsibility for their learning and have high expectations that they can learn • take responsibility for their behaviour and its impact on others 	<p>Parents/Guardians are expected to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have high expectations of their child’s behaviour and an understanding of the school’s behavioural expectations • communicate with the school in regards to 	<p>The school will deliver an inclusive and comprehensive curriculum which promotes positive behaviours and emphasises the wellbeing of every child focusing on pro-social behaviours in curriculum content.</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • model the school values • comply with the schools' Expected Behaviours and work with teachers and parents in developing strategies to improve outcomes. 	<p>their child's circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cooperate with the school by assisting in the development and enforcement of strategies to address individual needs 	<p>The school will employ whole school and classroom practices to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students and focus on the implementation of preventative and early intervention strategies to deal with attendance and behavioural issues.</p> <p>All student management observations, commendations and wellbeing referrals will be posted on the student's record on Compass.</p>
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6. Student Behavioural Expectations and Management

6.1 Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the college under any circumstances.

6.2 Our school wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework sets out explicit expected behaviours for all students, preventative strategies and staged responses to inappropriate or negative behaviours. All staff are expected to follow the SWPBS framework to ensure a consistent approach across the school.

6.3 Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be supported through a staged response as per the SWPBS Behaviour Management Process, including:

- Understanding the student's background and needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student's learning program
- Referring students back to the SWPBS Expected Behaviours Matrix

6.4 Broader support strategies will include:

- Involving and supporting the parent/guardian
- Involving relevant staff where appropriate
- Mentoring and/or counselling
- Developing individualised learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- Providing extra-curricular activities to improve engagement
- Involving external support agencies



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- Contact with the Regional Office.

6.5 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. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

6.6 Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

6.7 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.

7. Responding to Violent and Dangerous Student Behaviours of Concern

7.1 Occasionally, students may behave in a way that threatens the safety of themselves or others. Incidents involving violent or dangerous behaviour can cause distress for the students involved or witnessing the incident, their parents and staff members.

7.2 Examples of violent or dangerous behaviours of concern include but are not limited to:

- self-injuring behaviour, such as hitting/kicking walls, head-banging, self-harming
- attacking other students or staff, including hitting, biting, kicking, hair pulling
- throwing furniture or other objects at students and staff
- a verbal threat of harm which you believe a student will immediately enact
- running onto a road or near some other hazard.

Incidents of violent or dangerous behaviour may occur following a period of escalating behaviour or may occur without any notice. In some cases such behaviour may be associated with a student's disability.

7.3 Interventions to prevent, de-escalate and respond to violent and dangerous student behaviours of concern can be broken into four categories:

7.3.1 Prevention and Early Intervention

Section 2 of this Policy (Engagement Strategies) outlines the College's strategies and processes for preventing violent and dangerous behaviour, as well as the early intervention strategies used to support students' wellbeing, address underlying issues and prevent foreseeable behavioural problems.

7.3.2 De-escalation

The risk of violent and dangerous behaviours of concern can often be minimised by actions taken immediately before or as a behaviour begins to escalate. Therefore it is important for teachers to strive to identify a student's triggers and early signs of escalation so they know when and how to act.



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If a student is becoming agitated, but their behaviour is not placing them or others at imminent risk of harm, teachers should employ de-escalation tactics to prevent behaviours from escalating.

Some recognised de-escalation strategies include:

- acknowledging the student's anger/distress
- using a calm tone of voice and clear, direct language or student's preferred method of communication (focusing on the behaviours you want them to display rather than the ones you don't)
- adopting a non-threatening body stance and body language
- allowing adequate personal space
- using non-verbal cues
- distracting the student from the source of their anger or distress by discussing another topic of their interest
- providing options (within limits) to help the student feel they are still in control of their decisions.

In some cases, physical intervention may be needed to direct a student away from the source of their distress. For more information on physical interventions, see section 8 below.

For students with a pattern of behaviour escalation, effective de-escalation techniques should be detailed in a Behaviour Support Plan.

Teachers and other staff who are likely to be in close contact with that student should be familiar with the strategies outlined in the plan. Including parents/carers in this planning process is important as the use of consistent de-escalation strategies across both school and home environments will help to make sure these strategies are effective and do not cause confusion for the student.

When attempting to de-escalate a student's behaviour, staff members should observe whether the student's agitation is lowering or if the behaviour is continuing to escalate. If it appears the behaviour is escalating to the point that it is placing the student or others at imminent risk of harm, the staff member present will need to move from a de-escalation approach to incident intervention.

7.3.3 Incident Intervention

Occasionally a student's behaviour may reach the point where their behaviour threatens the safety of themselves or others. This may occur following a period of escalating behaviour, when de-escalation techniques have been employed but have not been effective. In either scenario, the actions of school staff should focus on protecting the safety of all students (including the student behaving dangerously), themselves and other staff.

Where possible, staff members should:

- seek help from school leadership and other staff members to manage the incident
- move all other students in the vicinity to a safe distance away from the student behaving dangerously



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- remove objects that may be used to cause harm from the vicinity of the student, if safe do so
- follow emergency response procedures set out in the school's Emergency Management Plan.

7.3.4 Response and Recovery

Immediately following an incident, the Principal or their delegate will enact the response and recovery processes in the school's Emergency Management Plan as appropriate.

7.4 Intervention in student altercations

Duty of care obligations require teachers and principals to use their authority and to be proactive where students are fighting, being violent or threatening.

Intervention does not always have to be physical and can involve verbal intervention, physically approaching students (without being in striking distance), calling for support from other staff and contacting police. Restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy.

For steps to take when intervening in physical altercations, staff should refer to the following:

- Appendix – Dept of Education Fact Sheet: Staff intervention in physical altercations between students
- [DET Restraint and Seclusion Policy](#)

7.5 Time out / Withdrawal

Time out is different from seclusion. There may be occasions where it is appropriate to support a student whose behaviour is escalating to move away from the source of their distress and/or from their peers for the purposes of de-escalating their behaviour.

In these situations, the student should be provided with a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until their behaviour has de-escalated. Such an approach may be known as time out or withdrawal.

In all cases, a staff member should maintain visual and/or verbal contact with the student to monitor their wellbeing and the student should not be prevented from leaving the time out location.

Where time out is identified as an appropriate behaviour support or de-escalation technique for a student, it should be included in the student's Behaviour Support Plan.

8. Suspension and Expulsion

8.1 Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be applied in situations consistent with Department Policy:

- [Suspensions Policy](#)
- [Expulsions Policy](#)

8.2 Measures which may be used to address behavioural issues prior to suspension include:



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- Meetings with parents/guardians
- Use of a behaviour tracker to monitor behaviour
- Withdrawal from activities for a specified period. Where appropriate, parents/guardians will be informed of such withdrawals.
- Mediations between students
- Referral to Student Wellbeing Team for further support
- Detention: teachers may require a student to complete school work or additional work or duties at recess or lunch break, or after school. No more than half the break time may be given to a detention during school hours. After school detentions will not exceed 45 minutes. Parents will be informed of an after school detention for their child at least the day prior to the detention and in family circumstances where this would create undue hardship, the school may negotiate an alternative disciplinary measure with parents/guardians.

9. Communication

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

- Available publicly on our school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Available to all staff on Sharepoint.

10. Related Policies

10.1 The following policies can be referred to in conjunction with this policy:

- Attendance Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Supervision and Duty of Care Policy
- VUSC Statement of Values and School Philosophy

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

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

11. Appendices

- SWPBS Overview
- SWPBS Explicitly teaching our expected behaviours
- SWPBS Behaviour Management Process



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- SWPBS Matrix of Expected Behaviours
- Dept of Education Fact Sheet: Staff intervention in physical altercations between students

12. Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as part of the school review cycle or as required by changes to Department of Education policy and guidelines.

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Appendix

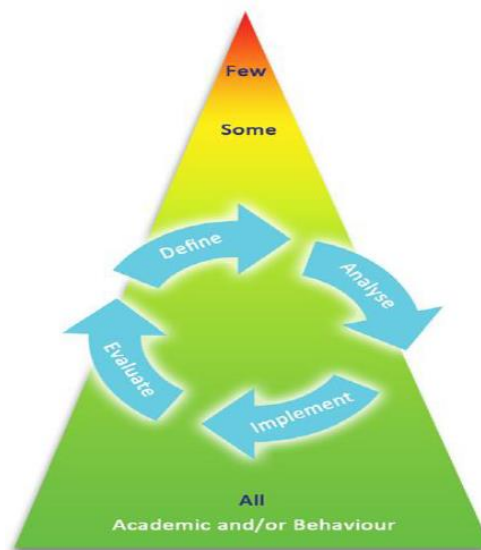
POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT OVERVIEW

Introducing, modelling and reinforcing positive social behaviour is an important component of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioural expectations and rewarding or recognising students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehaviour to occur before responding.

The purpose of the Positive Behaviour Support program is to establish a school climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students.

It provides schools with a well-researched, evidence-based framework for improving the engagement of all students, including those with behavioural difficulties. It provides school communities with an effective, evidence based approach to creating positive, safe and engaging school environments and focuses on three levels of implementation.

Three Tiers of Support:



The diagram illustrates that the most intensive and individual interventions will be required for the fewer number of students while the majority of students will be effectively maintained by the whole school approaches and strategies adopted by the school.

The continuum of PBS

Primary Prevention – a universal provision of school and classroom-wide systems for all students, staff and school community members. The aim is to provide highly predictable school and classroom environments through the establishment of school-wide expectations of all members of the school community and implementation of school-wide behaviour management strategies that focus on empowerment rather than control.



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Secondary Prevention – specialised group systems for students who demonstrate at-risk behaviour.

Tertiary Prevention – specialized and individualised systems of support for individual students who have not had their needs adequately met through universal and group support.

This approach to behaviour management aims to create a positive, engaging and safe school environment, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for school leaders, staff, students and parents/carers.

The Positive Behaviour Support approach focuses on promoting:

- professional leadership
- establishment of shared vision and goals
- high expectations of all learners
- accountability – evidence based systems and interventions
- learning communities
- stimulating and secure learning environments.

Students who demonstrate positive behaviour by demonstrating our core College values will receive recognition in the form of a Commendation and will be considered for student achievement certificates/awards which are presented at an assembly.

Attachments:

- SWPBS Explicitly teaching our expected behaviours
- SWPBS Behaviour Management Process
- SWPBS Matrix of Expected Behaviours
- Department of Education Fact Sheet: Staff intervention in physical altercations between students