

**POLICY NUMBER:** SWPOL - 170  
**VERSION:** 2.0  
**APPROVED BY ELT:** March 2017  
**ENSORED BY COUNCIL:** March 2017



## Academic Care Policy

### 1. Purpose

Cornish College is committed to providing a physically, emotionally and spiritually safe and supportive environment for students and staff and their families who make up the Cornish College community.

Cornish College takes its responsibility to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for all members of its community very seriously. As a College committed to a sustainable future, we see the principle of caring for yourself, others and the natural world as fundamental to the development of a positive learning environment. This policy outlines the way that we expect members of our community to interact with each other and is governed by our core values of respect, compassion, integrity and creativity.

The emotional and physical wellbeing of our students is pivotal to their success at school and in their future lives. Physically and emotionally healthy students are happy, able to deal positively with life's challenges, experience a sense of connectedness with the school and others, engage productively in learning, and are well placed to develop into well-balanced people.

We use the concept of academic care which recognises the inextricable link between pastoral care, student wellbeing and academic progress. The College recognises that all teachers have pastoral care duties and are engaged in providing academic care through academic structures and processes. A team approach is undertaken and a variety of experienced staff are available at different levels to assist.

Our obligations to ensure the care, safety and welfare of students extend to all school related activities.

Through the application of this policy, Cornish College aims to:

- Develop a positive learning environment in which all staff assume responsibility for the overall welfare of the students in their care
- Provide successful experiences for all children, where children feel safe and secure in a supportive environment and a sense of belonging and wellbeing are encouraged.
- Develop positive social behaviours, resilience and problem solving skills in students.
- Raise awareness in students of others and their cultures, accept diversity and are inclusive in their language and behaviour.
- Ensure staff are confident, skilled and proactive in the management of student welfare issues.
- Ensure school families feel supported and respected.
- Communicate processes about student welfare that are clear and well known to ensure the effective support of the school community.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students and external providers (where appropriate).

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### 3. Key Responsibilities

Position/Roles	Responsibilities
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comply with VRQA School registration requirements.</li> <li>Ensure the College meets its duty of care to students.</li> </ul>
Executive Leadership Team (ELT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the College meets its duty of care to students both physically and emotionally</li> <li>Provide support for staff in undertaking their responsibility in this area.</li> </ul>
Academic Care Leaders and Wellbeing Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and manage a positive learning environment in which all staff assume responsibility for the learning and wellbeing of the students in their care.</li> </ul>
All staff will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Endeavour to provide successful experiences for all children, where children feel safe and secure in a supportive environment and a sense of belonging and wellbeing are encouraged.</li> <li>Help students develop positive social behaviours, resilience and problem solving skills.</li> </ul>
Students will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be respectful and compassionate to all members of the community.</li> </ul>

### 4. Key Elements Of The Policy

#### Implementation

##### 4.1. General

The wellbeing of students is a shared responsibility between the College, the home and the community.

The College has a proactive and strategic approach to the wellbeing of students, rather than a reactive one.

Staff meet regularly to ensure a school wide approach to wellbeing issues, and prioritise and address the identified needs of the College community.

##### 4.2 Academic care programs and strategies

The College educates students on matters of academic care through:

- A curriculum that develops the knowledge and skills needed for positive relationships and healthy decision-making.
- Chapel services across all year levels.

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- Exploration of The International Baccalaureate PYP learner profile
- Involvement in SCOPE (Student Consultants Offering Peer Encouragement).
- Buddy programs for cross age support and new students
- Student leadership programs
- The House system
- Targeted student workshops
- Lunchtime interest groups

#### **4.3 Support structures**

The College provides a range of support structures, including:

- Career counselling
- Chaplain
- Individual Needs Department
- Individual counselling by College psychologists
- Monitoring of, and responding to, protracted student absences
- Prayer group
- Academic Care meetings
- Support group meetings for individual students experiencing difficulties
- Form and class teachers, Academic Care Leaders, Heads of School, Administration and First Aid support, Principal and Deputy Principal.

#### **4.4 Consultation with College psychologists:**

Confidentiality between staff and College psychologists will be maintained except in cases where parents of children need to be informed about life-threatening behaviours or if Child Safe Standards, Crimes Act (Failure to Disclose or Failure to Protect offences), or Mandatory Reporting Guidelines apply.

#### **4.5 Restorative Practice**

The College has committed to the use of a Restorative Practice approach to student welfare and discipline as well as classroom practices.

Restorative Practices is a relationship-based approach to building caring communities around students whilst not accepting disruptive or harmful behaviour. The philosophy is to teach young people to take responsibility for their actions and repair any harm that has been done. It recognises and encourages the contributions that staff, parents, carers and the community makes in promoting relationships that enable better behaviour and better learning. In specific instances of conflict, all those affected are involved to find a way forward, reducing anger and resentments. In the classroom, teachers and students work together to develop a caring community in which students are accountable for their

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behaviour and develop social-emotional skills to enable them to become respectful and responsible members of the community.

#### **4.6 Academic Care structures**

The College is divided into different sub schools, appropriate to the needs, ages and stages of the students to ensure that each student is known personally by a smaller number of staff members.

Academic care structures are based on class teacher focus in ELC and Primary School and form groups for each secondary class in the Middle and Senior Schools. Academic Care Coordinators support the Heads of School and teachers.

Staff must consult with Heads of School or the Principal:

- Concerns about the risk of harm to a student - refer to, Child Safe, Failure to Disclose/Protect and Mandatory Reporting Guidelines
- Concerns about life-threatening behaviours, for example, severe depression, indications or threats of self-harm, eating disorders or threat of harm to others
- Concerns about high risk behaviours or difficult circumstances such as alcohol and drug abuse, running away from home, severe family difficulties, traumatic experiences, acute illness or deaths in the family
- Observed a significant decline in a student's behaviour, mood or academic performance

Activities and structures

- Professional learning for teachers on student wellbeing issues
- Pastoral care structures and programs
- Fostering a community in which students care for and support each other
- Programs to educate and support the parent community
- Other pastoral care programs and activities (see above)

#### **4.7 Communication of policies to the College community:**

Behaviour Management, Child Safe, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policies are available

- To students: in student record books and specific leaflets available throughout the College and on the Learning and Management system (The Hive).
- To parents: in student record books and on the College website
- All pastoral policies are available to staff on the College LMS

### **5. References**

College Policies including:

- Child Safe Policy, SWPOL -001
- Child Safe Code of Conduct, SWPOL - 002

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- Behaviour Management Policy, SWPOL -040
- First Aid Policy, SWPOL - 060
- Mandatory Reporting Policy, SWPOL - 070
- Failure to Disclose Policy, SWPOL - 071
- Bullying and Unacceptable Behaviours Policy, SWPOL – 080
- Staff Duty Policy (onsite supervision), SWPOL -090
- Student Attendance Policy, SWPOL – 110
- Student Welfare (External Providers) Policy, SWPOL -130
- OHS policy, POL – 022
- Privacy Policy, SGPOL – 010

**Regulations & Legislation:**

- ETR Regulations 2007 Sch 2.12 Care, safety and welfare of students
- Child Safe Standards Victorian Child Safe Standards & Ministerial Order 870
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) As amended 2014 to include offences of: (i) failing to disclose a sexual offence: (ii) grooming for sexual conduct and (iii) failing to protect a child from sexual offence.
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 CYFA (Vic.)