Safe and Inclusive Virtual Learning Policy

December 2022

VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA

Background

Virtual School Victoria (VSV) has a responsibility to prepare students for successful participation in society. All individuals and groups within the VSV community are expected to model behaviours that support the agreed global values of **Respect**, **Empathy**, **Collaboration** and **Growth**. VSV will uphold the rights of all students to learn and all teachers to teach. VSV will encourage and support students to interact with each other and teachers appropriately whilst taking responsibility for their actions.

Policy Statement

VSV will provide a safe, inclusive working environment conducive to learning, free from bullying and harassment, giving all students the opportunity to experience success. VSV recognises the vulnerability of the student cohort and is committed to providing appropriate student support services and developing programs that meet the individual needs of students. It is also recognised that inappropriate student actions may be symptomatic of challenges created by health circumstances (e.g. anxiety, OCD, ADD), trauma experiences or difficulty with engagement arising from significant gaps in learning. Students have opportunities to participate in student voice and leadership.

This is achieved through:
- Students being challenged, supported and encouraged to participate in order to reach their full potential.
- The development of positive and trusting relationships with subject teachers and Learning Advisors.
- Encouraging students to accept personal responsibility and take pride in themselves and their school.
- Acknowledging and celebrating the achievement and success of others.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive, engaging and compliant.
- Striving to understand what drives student actions and how it impacts on student learning at VSV.
- Reinforcing appropriate and responsible actions as well as managing inappropriate actions.
- Promoting collaboration between students and with teachers which encourages a positive school climate.
- Supporting students to develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, as outlined in the VSV Enrolment Handbook.
- Consequences for both responsible and irresponsible interactions being developed and applied consistently.
- Teaching staff being given opportunities to develop skills in managing a safe and inclusive virtual learning, including online lessons.

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility for managing student behaviour and interactions in online lessons rests with the teacher.

Principal

- Ensure that challenging student actions are managed through procedures supported by a strong evidence-based understanding of how student learning and behaviour are best supported.
- Ensure that new staff, students and their families are aware of appropriate and responsible actions in a virtual/online learning environment.
- Ensure that parents/cares are aware of their rights to advocacy and processes should they have grievances relating to the school's management of challenging student actions.
- Teach and model consultative decision making and ensure structures are in place for student voice and leadership.
- Use system level consequences and interagency support programs with students who do not respond to teacher and/or school consequences.

Assistant Principal: Student Engagement and Wellbeing

- Ensure that the Bullying Prevention Policy, Child Safe Standards and Complaints Policy are clearly defined and understood by all members of the VSV school community.
- Ensure the *Safe and Inclusive Virtual Learning Policy* is consistently and appropriately applied.
- Promote and reinforce responsible actions.
- Be available for consultation and support about management of student behaviour and interactions in the virtual/online learning environment.
- Ensure appropriate professional learning programs (including sharing best practice) are provided so staff have an understanding and knowledge of management strategies.
- Access services and agencies which can support students in developing skill and responsibility for their behaviour and interactions.

Subject Teachers and Learning Advisors

- Develop and foster positive relationships with and between students.
- Apply the *Safe and Inclusive Virtual Learning Environment Policy*, Student Engagement Policy and the Bullying Prevention Policy consistently.
- Structure the teaching program to facilitate learning that is inclusive.
- Develop strategies to manage supportive learning environments.
- Contribute to the development of Individual Education Plans for relevant students where mandated.
- Develop with their students agreed online lesson expectations.
- Inform parents/carers of any concerns at an early stage.
- Encourage students to seek support.
- Focus on the action and not the student.
- Model appropriate procedures for responding to complaints.

Parents/Carers

- Ensure students attend online lessons regularly.
- Support positive student participation and interaction in online lessons.
- Encourage and support students in their learning and wellbeing.
- Inform the school of any issue which might impact on the student's engagement, learning or wellbeing.
- Work in partnership with school personnel in the implementation of the *Safe and Inclusive Virtual Learning Policy* to ensure a supportive learning environment.
- Engage with the school values, policies and procedures in a respectful manner.

Students

- Act in accordance with the Student Wellbeing, Inclusion and Engagement Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy and Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Respect the right of all students to grow and learn in a positive environment.
- Engage with school policies and procedures in a respectful manner.

Procedures/Guidelines

The primary responsibility for managing student behaviours and interactions in the online learning environment rests with each teacher.

Teachers build lesson atmosphere and a safe supportive learning environment
- Establish explicit online lesson expectations.
- Develop genuine respectful relationships in accordance with the VSV Pedagogical Model for Online Learning.
- Use HIT strategies to promote student engagement and learning.
- Acknowledge and celebrate success for student engagement and achievement.

In dealing with departures from expectations
- Respond in a non-confrontational, non-escalating manner.
- Remind class openly, or individual student privately (e.g. private messaging) of expectations.

For persistent departures from expectations
- One on one counselling with the student by the teacher (during or after the online lesson as appropriate).
- Brief reflective time-out (e.g. break out rooms).
- Document (on the student database).
- Contact with parent/carer (mobile/phone/email/visit) by the subject teacher or Learning Advisor.
- Seek advice from/inform the Learning Advisor, Student Coordinator, Leading Teacher or Assistant Principal: Student Engagement and Wellbeing.
- Consult the Team Leader: Student Wellbeing or another member of the Student Wellbeing Team to support the student and family if appropriate.

Where a student does not respond to the above
- Warn the student that temporary exclusion from online lessons may occur until an interview with relevant parties is organised. Continue encouraging student learning through the use of online lesson recordings, direct student-teacher contact and asynchronous learning materials.
- Head of School organises an interview with student, parent/carer, teacher/s and Assistant Principal: Student Engagement & Wellbeing as appropriate.
- Record actions on the database.
- Review the student's Individual Education Plan, if applicable.

Repeatedly interfering with teaching and learning; non-responsive to the above
- Exclusion from online lessons at VSV will be considered as a last resort and only where there is risk of direct harm to self or others.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.
Review date: December 2024

Further information and resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Student Wellbeing, Inclusion and Engagement Policy
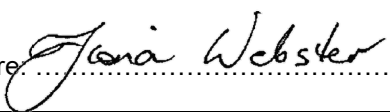
Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident. VSV is developing a centralised incident reporting system to collect and collate school data for recording and responding to bullying incidents.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:
- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers with School Council approval
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey
- Staff Surveys

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with School Council and the Child Safety Team.

Policy review and approval

Created date	December 2022
Endorsed by	**Fiona Webster** Executive Principal Signature: ....../Fiona Webster...........................
Endorsed on	**Date**: 13th December 2022
Next review date	**December 2024**

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SCHOOL VICTORIA

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