

STATEMENT OF VALUES AND SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the values of our school community and explain the vision, mission and objectives of our school.

At Ashwood High School we believe it is integral to offer students choice in their studies. Our curriculum enables students to select a course of study that is appropriate in its level of challenge and is relevant to a student's personal interests and aspirations.

Ashwood High School provides a comprehensive Year 7-10 curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum - which includes a broad range of units of study. The school promotes an integrated, inquiry, evidence-based approach to develop a differentiated curriculum which effectively meets the learning needs of all students. The 21st century curriculum at Ashwood High School provides rich, real-world tasks to embed skills and knowledge, whilst at the same time developing the student as a well-rounded individual who is prepared to embark upon their post school future capably and confidently.

Our professional team of teachers deliver this curriculum using a range of contemporary and innovative pedagogical practices. We embrace and integrate ICT in all classes so that our students are able to effectively engage with a range of technological platforms. Learning is extended beyond the classroom as students are provided with opportunities to connect with local and global communities. Ashwood High School teachers are committed to providing innovative teaching and learning strategies which is supported by contemporary and relevant educational research. We are dedicated to establishing supportive and authentic relationships to ensure our students enjoy learning and achieve their full potential.

We are proud of our students' achievements at Ashwood High School. The Senior School curriculum provides students of all academic potential with a depth and breadth of subjects to maximise opportunities and choices to further tertiary studies and career pathways. Post compulsory programs include VCE academic studies, VET options and the applied learning VCE VM course.

We understand the importance of decisions being made at this critical stage of education. Ashwood High School offers a range of resources and programs to guide, challenge and support Senior School students (and their families) with relevant, engaging and purposeful course objectives and outlines.

POLICY

Ashwood High School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Ashwood High School support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

This policy outlines our school's vision, mission, objective, values and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our staff induction handbook, student planner and enrolment/transition packs. To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

- display posters and banners that promote your values in our school
- celebrate our values in our school newsletter
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies.

VISION AND MISSION

Ashwood High School's vision is embodied in its motto: '**Vision Inspired Action**'. In order to realise this motto, Ashwood High School has developed an agreed Mission Statement to ensure:

'The ongoing development of a learning community of staff, students and parents committed to a culture of engagement, empowerment and excellence based on high expectations, authentic relationships and mutual respect. This school culture promotes personal growth leading to meaningful citizenship and successful pathways to further studies and employment through students' academic success.'

Our students are provided with an outstanding array of curricular and co-curricular programs to cultivate student talent across what we believe are the four pillars of a GREAT school:

1. Strong emphasis on Academic Excellence
2. Sporting Excellence program
3. Significant commitment to the Creative Arts
4. Focus on Civics, Citizenship and Leadership.

OBJECTIVES

Our school's objectives are considered as part of the 4 yearly strategic planning process and reflected in the goals listed in our current School Strategic Plan (SSP). We also develop an Annual Implementation Plan to operationalise the goals and key improvement strategies contained in our SSP.

VALUES

In order to support our School's Motto and Mission, our school community has developed the Ashwood High School 'CHOIR' values. 'CHOIR' reflects Ashwood High School's five core values that underpin our teaching, leadership and learning behaviours, actions and decisions.

Community (of Learning and Trust)

It is an honour and source of pride to be part of the Ashwood community. A strong sense of community

empowers trust, autonomy and self-efficacy. Our school culture, structures and processes recognise and appreciate diversity. Our teaching and learning programs address, support and encourage the range of

learning styles, capabilities and interests of all members of our school community ensuring access and inclusion through a belief that there is strength in difference. The school focuses on the holistic development of each person through a strong emphasis on the value of co-curricular programs that enhance learning, personal development, school and community connectedness.

High Expectations

Students and staff alike will aspire to do their personal best. Each student and staff member will continue to be challenged and supported to achieve their best academically and personally through effort. The school achieves high standards through having high expectations. The school believes in high levels of accountability and transparency that creates a culture of responsibility and discipline. Our school has a firm but fair and consistent approach to discipline where students gain an understanding of the balance between rights and responsibilities and all members of the community are accountable for their own actions. Our school aims to provide for a safe, ordered and secure learning and working environment for all.

Optimism (Reflection and Resilience)

The school will thrive as a result of a positive attitude and spirit towards continuous improvement (at an individual and school level). All members of the community will aspire to demonstrate an intense 'heart felt' enthusiasm (passion) to achieve school and personal goals, striving for excellence at an individual and collective level. A positive attitude towards reflective practice, coupled with a culture of honest giving, receiving and interpreting feedback will instil resilience and self-belief, which involves the ability to maintain positive and consistent effort in the face of personal challenge.

Innovation (Creativity and Sustainability)

Our school believes that significant positive change must be explicitly linked to our moral purpose. This involves the application of new ideas and use of highly effective structures, processes and thinking tools to solve problems in transformational contexts. This involves harnessing creative thinking and emerging technologies to create a sustainable future. Sustainability also refers to a purposeful use of human and physical resources to improve student learning, wellbeing, engagement and pathways towards a bright future within a global economy and community.

Respect

The four respects: Respect for teachers, Respect for peers, Respect for School and Community, Self-Respect. This includes courtesy and manners, which our school will teach, model, encourage and expect. These are honourable behaviours that underpin mutual respect and community expectations.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

Ashwood High School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

Staff have a range of expectations around behaviour and must follow our school and Department policies and the Victorian Public Service Code of Conduct and Values. Teaching staff also adhere to the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

Students are supported by school staff to meet expected standards of behaviour as outlined in our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Inclusion and Diversity Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy.

Information about the expectations on parents and carers to ensure schools remain respectful and inclusive places is outlined in the Department's Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy and our Respect for School Staff Policy.

Ashwood High School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

As principals and school leaders, we will:

- model positive behaviour and effective leadership
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe behaviour is expected of everyone
- ensure all parents/carers are aware of the expectations outlined in the Department's Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy
- behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide safe and inclusive environments
- plan, implement and review our work to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students at school
- identify and support students who are or may be at risk
- do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential
- work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- respond appropriately when safe and inclusive behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
- inform parents of the school's communication and complaints procedures
- ask any person who is acting in an offensive, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate way to leave the school grounds.

As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

- model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- proactively engage with parents about student outcomes
- work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs
- communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents
- treat all members of the school community with respect.

As parents and carers, we will:

- model positive behaviour to our child
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community, in line with the Department's Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy.
- ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction
- take an interest in our child's school and learning
- work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child
- communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising

concerns

- support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students
- follow the school's processes for communication with staff and making complaints
- treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

As students, we will:

- model positive behaviour to other students
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- comply with and model school values
- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment
- actively participate in school
- not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

As community members, we will:

- model positive behaviour to the school community
- treat other members of the school community with respect
- support school staff to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
- utilise the school's processes for communication with staff and submitting complaints.

UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Schools are not public places, and the Principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds. Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students or members of our school community will not be tolerated at school, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- being violent or threatening violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- speaking or behaving in a rude, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via email, social media, or over the telephone
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- discriminatory or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this Statement of Values and School Philosophy may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences by the Principal.

At the Principal's discretion, unreasonable behaviour may be managed by:

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
- implementing specific communication protocols
- written warnings
- conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
- exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
- reports to Victoria Police
- legal action.

Inappropriate student behaviour will be managed in according with our school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy.

Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy ensures that everyone in our school community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create a school that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

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 staff handbook

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Department of Education and Training policies and resources:

- [Work-Related Violence in Schools Policy](#)
- [Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy](#)

Ashwood High School policies:

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Parent Complaints Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Created date	March 2022
Reviewed date	October 2025
Approved by	Meg McLellan – Acting Principal and School Council
Next review date	October 2029