

## 1. School Profile Statement

Lowanna College is a single campus Year 7-12 school with a current student population of 970. It is the only Secondary Education provider for the Moe-Newborough and district community. The townships of Erica, Rawson, and Yallourn North are feeder communities, along with other smaller rural areas.

Our transition data is very constant at 80% of the available Grade 6 cohort transitioning to Lowanna College.

The local area is one of general disadvantage with high rates of unemployment compared with the national figures. Students come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The College's Student Family Occupation (SFO) Index is 0.60, indicating a low socio-economic background for many of our students.

Our staffing profile includes an Executive Principal, 4 Assistant Principals, 3 Leading Teachers (5 in 2017), 58.7 EFT teaching staff and 26.3 ES staff.

The College offers a broad curriculum and is divided into three distinct Mini Schools, each with an Assistant Principal responsible for the teaching and learning program, student management and welfare. Each Mini School is responsible for two year levels (7-8, 9-10 and 11-12). The College offers a core program to Junior School students, a core and elective program for Middle School students, and VCE, VCAL and VETiS options for Senior School students.

The College has close ties with the other Secondary Colleges in the Latrobe Valley. All three are closely involved with the Technical College to be developed in nearby Morwell and also formed a partnership to establish a campus, LVFLO (Latrobe Valley Flexible Learning Option), for students disengaged from education. This campus has been in operation since 2014 and has had over 120 students transition.

Lowanna College went through an extensive process to develop a new College Vision in 2015. The vision statement serves to enrich our school motto of 'Broader Horizons' and commits all in our College community to have high expectations of students and an expectation that they will achieve excellence in all their endeavours. It reads:

*"The Lowanna College Community is committed to high expectations and believes students will achieve excellence in their endeavours".*

The school motto of 'Broader Horizons' refers to the opportunities that students can access in a global world, a world beyond Newborough, the Latrobe Valley and Australia.

At Lowanna College we value respectful relationships. As such the College has developed a set of behaviour norms for all members of the College community (students, staff and parents) based on the core value of mutual respect. The norms include statements regarding tolerance of individual differences.

As a Victorian government school, in accordance with the principles outlined in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), the programs of, and teaching practices at Lowanna College will support and promote the principles and practices of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- An 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

Additionally, in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), Lowanna College will provide a secular education and will not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect and is open to adherents of any philosophy, religion or faith.

## 2. Whole-School Prevention Statement

Lowanna College is committed to promoting student achievement, fostering positive relationships and catering for individual differences to enable the pursuit of excellence within a caring environment. Excellence is defined as the pursuit of personal best through a broad education, delivery of improved teaching through a whole school professional development plan and the pursuit of teaching and learning programs which maximise individual development.

Our overall student attendance data ranks stronger than other schools on the comparison measure which is pleasing result for both staff and the community. The well-established link between attendance and achievement has been a recent focus of the College. The extreme level of absenteeism from some students does have an impact on the overall data but it is important to note that most students attend almost every day and school is important to them and their families. In the case where students with major attendance problems have been identified, programs have been established to reengage these students. These programs range from one-on-one to small group sessions which enables staff to cater for larger numbers of students over a longer period of time. Additionally, the support provided through the introduction of the LVFLO has provided assistance in this area.

Lowanna College has a well-coordinated and holistic approach to student wellbeing, clearly outlined in strong policy through School Council and its relevant subcommittees. Behaviour norms for all members of the College community have recently been developed, supporting a whole school behaviour management strategy. This is inclusive of a solid Bullying and Harassment policy and Student Internet Use policy, and the knowledge within our staff and students that bullying, in its many forms, will not be tolerated.

The College is committed to fully engaging students in all levels of the school structure. The encouragement of student voice is a high priority at both a classroom and school management level. Student leadership skills are actively taught and encouraged within the College program. Students are involved in both formal committee structure and informally in College decision making processes.

Lowanna College offers a variety of student engagement and inclusion support mechanisms, including an Adolescent Health Nurse, First Aid Officer, Koori Education Centre, Student Welfare Coordinator, College Chaplain and Chaplaincy Committee, Educational Support and Individual Pathways Planning. Each of these support mechanisms aim to work with all members of the College Community and are responsible for both proactive and reactive programs as well as for individual and small group support.

Lowanna College is committed to high expectations for all and as such has established a culture of "Growth Mindset." We believe that all students are able to learn and reach their full potential. Staff are trained and in the language of mindset to encourage students to continually apply themselves through effort and persistence in order to see feedback as an opportunity to learn and develop their skills.

## 3. Rights and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Guiding Principles

Every member of the Lowanna College community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

### 3.2 The Equal Opportunity Act 2010

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

### 3.3 The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference.

### 3.4 The Disabilities Standards for Education 2005

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with a disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students. The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

### 3.5 Bullying and Harassment

Lowanna College seeks to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010.

Definitions:

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person. Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings). Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:

- teasing and being made fun of
- spreading of rumours online
- sending unwanted messages
- defamation

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

#### **Responding to Harassment, Bullying and Cyberbullying**

All students are made aware of the following:

*If you are being harassed or bullied, you should tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop. If any member of the school community sees or is aware of another person being harassed, bullied or cyber bullied they should take appropriate action. This involves being proactive in letting a teacher, coordinator, member of staff or senior student leader know about the situation. It is not acceptable for bystanders to do nothing about bullying and harassment. All concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.*

#### **Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community**

Student, staff and parent behaviour contributes to the educational, social, emotional and physical development of all members of the school community.

#### **Rights and Responsibilities of Students**

Actively teaching students at Lowanna College whole school engagement, attendance and behavioural expectations creates a highly predictable environment that allows students to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from each other.

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition</li> <li>participate fully in the school's educational program</li> </ul>	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.</li> <li>demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students.</li> <li>As students' progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.</li> </ul>

### Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment</li> <li>be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student</li> </ul>	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement and inclusion policy.</li> <li>know how students learn and how to teach them effectively.</li> <li>know the content they teach.</li> <li>know their students.</li> <li>plan and assess for effective learning.</li> <li>create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.</li> <li>use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.</li> <li>be aware of the suitable response(s) to an incident, and are familiar with and follow relevant College policies, inclusive of the Student Internet Acceptable Use Agreement.</li> </ul>

### Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged</p>	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours.</li> <li>ensure their child's regular attendance</li> <li>engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning.</li> <li>support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.</li> </ul>

## 4. Shared expectations

All school staff have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

Lowanna College's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values for Australian schools, which are:

- Care and Compassion  
*Care for self and others*
- Integrity  
*Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds*
- Doing Your Best  
*Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence*
- Respect  
*Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view*
- Fair Go  
*Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society*
- Responsibility  
*Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment*
- Freedom  
*Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others*
- Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion  
*Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others*
- Honesty and Trustworthiness  
*Be honest, sincere and seek the truth*

School expectations include:

- inclusive teaching practices
- accessible educational provision for all students
- parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- provision of appropriate student services
- development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

## **Restorative Approach**

Lowanna College is committed to the use of a restorative approach with students. No corporal punishment is used in the school.

The restorative approach:

- promotes awareness of others, responsibility and empathy
- involves direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution
- promotes relationship management rather than behaviour management
- provides consistency
- is concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied

## **Diversity in the school community**

Lowanna College values diversity within the school community. We aim to be respectful and inclusive to ensure that the rights of all individuals are protected. This will be achieved by ensuring open communication, clear expectations and consistency in our dealing with students, parents and staff.

## **5. School Actions and Consequences**

Lowanna College strives to establish and maintain respectful relationships and uses restorative practices as a basis for developing a positive learning and behaviour environment in the school.

We take a whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviours, building social skills, enhancing student and teacher relationships and creating an environment in which the entire school community can feel safe, secure and supported. School leaders and teachers are responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students. Bullying incidents should be managed proactively. Parents and the school community should be involved in the development of safety and wellbeing strategies.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- consistently acknowledging all students
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, in accordance with the College Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures, 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.
- Broader support strategies will include:
- involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- mentoring and/or counselling
- convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour

- developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, work education, camps/ outdoor education/creative arts
- involving community support agencies.

### **Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion**

When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the Ministerial Order 625 – Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion and associated resources.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/resources.aspx>

A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.

Consequences which may be used prior to suspension include:

- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time.

Where appropriate, parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

- Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.

Where students are required to undertake school work after school, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes.

The principal should ensure that parents/carers are informed at least the day before the detention. Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school work would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers), the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

- Convening of a support group as per DET guidelines.

## References

- The Student Engagement Policy  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/engagepol.aspx>
- Framework For Improving Student Outcomes  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/schoolperformance.aspx>
- Ministerial Order 625 – Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion and associated resources  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/resources.aspx>
- Disability Standards for Education  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/legislation.aspx>
- Safe Schools Coalition  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/safe-schools-coalition.aspx>
- The Child Safe Standards  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/childsafes.aspx>
- Bully Stoppers  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/principals.aspx>
- Charter of Human Rights  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/multirightchart.aspx>  
[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol\\_act/cohrara2006433/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/)
- Equal Opportunity Act  
<http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eo/eeoact.htm>
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/legislation/Pages/act2006.aspx>
- VIT Teacher Code of Conduct  
<http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/media/documents/imported-files/spl/Code-of-Conduct-2015.pdf>