Glen Waverley Secondary College
Teaching & Learning Policy
Glen Waverley Secondary College provides a positive, caring and supportive learning community, where diversity is highly valued, lifelong learning is embraced and all students have the opportunity to create their own personal futures. The College embraces the development of a collaborative learning culture which values innovative pedagogy and seeks to create and sustain a learning community which supports personalised continuous progression of learning, developing powerful autonomous, lifelong learners with ability to create personal futures.

As a high performing school, Glen Waverley Secondary College prides itself on academic excellence in an environment where individual and collective student academic, sporting, music and the arts achievements are recognised and celebrated. Underlying the focus on excellence is the recognition that this can only be achieved in an environment where students are happy, healthy and resilient.

The core purpose and work of Glen Waverley Secondary College is captured in the College Vision and Values, emphasising the importance of ‘creating and sustaining a Learning Community where everyone continually learns and grows’. The Vision and Values links the three essential components of the GWSC Learning Community:

- Valuing diversity and Learning to live together
- Embracing life long learning and
- Creating personal futures

Glen Waverley Secondary College

VISION and VALUES

Creating and sustaining a LEARNING COMMUNITY where everyone continually learns and grows

Valuing diversity and Learning to live together

- developing positive, caring relationships in a safe environment
- working cooperatively and collaboratively
- each person being valued and respected
- valuing our diversity including our diverse cultural heritages and diverse ways of knowing and being,
- embracing our responsibilities as local, national and global citizens
- a commitment to digital citizenship.

Embracing life long learning

- connecting with and making sense of the world
- becoming adaptive, flexible, autonomous learners
- pursuing excellence
- being reflective and continually seeking to improve
- exploring diverse ways of knowing, thinking and learning

Creating personal futures

- developing resilience, self-confidence and a sense of personal efficacy and identity
- embracing a healthy lifestyle and an optimistic and hopeful outlook
- developing emotional intelligence
- accepting responsibility for creating a preferred personal future (at the local, national and global level)
- developing effective communication skills

A sense of self-worth and personal growth for each learner

leads to

- happy, positive, fulfilled individuals
- the realisation of individual potential
- the development of a moral and ethical foundation
- the development of a sustainable futures perspective

results in
Personalising the Learning of all Students at GWSC

As a College we recognise the need to optimise and personalise the learning of all students & equip them with the skills, dispositions & essential understandings to be successful, contributing members of the 21st century society.

- Teachers understand the importance of further developing effective teacher practice through the implementation of the GWSC Instructional Model and peer feedback
- A collaborative team structure is in place in core subjects at Year 7 & 8 supporting the learning of all students
- Professional Learning program in place to improve teacher knowledge and understanding of personalising student learning

Literacy Across the Curriculum: ‘Every Teacher is a Teacher of Literacy’

In response to the changing cohort at GWSC a whole school literacy approach is central to our teaching and learning program. At GWSC we believe that developing students’ literacy skills is fundamental to creating powerful learners.

It is essential that teachers ‘recognise and build on their students’ literacy skills and understanding within domains, ensuring all students are able to access the academic language and text types, domain specific vocabulary, concepts and behaviours required to be successful at school’ (DEECD, Key Characteristics of Effective Literacy Teaching 7-10, January 2010)

To meet this challenge GWSC has developed a whole school understanding that literacy is the responsibility of teachers in all Key Learning Areas. The emphasis is on Key Learning Areas developing an understanding of the literacy demands within their subject and the identification and utilisation of common literacy strategies used widely across the curriculum. Through targeted professional learning, teachers will develop the skills to select appropriate strategies to meet the specific needs of students within their class and to develop their capacity to integrate literacy and 21st century skills into their teaching practice.
21st Century Skills

Glen Waverley Secondary College has for many years had a strong focus on innovations in teaching and learning. In guiding the learning process, we have concentrated on developing students’ ability to think both critically and creatively, to set goals, to manage and reflect on their learning, to work both cooperatively and independently and to have sensitivity and awareness about when to apply these learning skills appropriately. These skills are transferable to all aspects of life; therefore the explicit teaching of these generic skills and learning dispositions is vital to ensure that concrete understandings are both initially developed and then continue.

The GWSC identified 21st Skills are outlined in the table below.

We know that a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy is essential for students to benefit from the inclusion of 21st century skills. In particular, embedding literacy across the curriculum and associated common strategies is a focus at Glen Waverley Secondary College.

ICT: "...harnessing exploration and discovery in learning through ICT's"

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have the potential to reshape and transform learning processes and contribute significantly to enhance learning outcomes. Glen Waverley Secondary College has vigorously pursued a sustained whole school approach aimed at developing the innovative use of computers within a framework of the latest global research relating to effective teaching and learning practices. Teachers routinely implement and explore a range of ICT applications that support and further the vision for learning within the College.

The focus of the College is to develop powerful learners with the skills and attributes to be effective, adaptive lifelong learners prepared for the challenges of a dynamic 21st Century.

Students at Glen Waverley Secondary College will harness the use of ICT to support:
• Personal learning
• Interpersonal learning
• Thinking and inquiry
• Communication
• Creating rich learning tasks

The vision for ICT and learning extends beyond seeing technologies simply as tools for gathering and processing information and as a presentation tool. The development of ICT skills is constantly supported but it is not enough. Students must be able to discerningly utilise ICT's to gather, process and apply information. They must be able to use ICT to develop deep understanding of concepts and ideas, develop creativity and critical thinking and solve complex problems within an inquiry learning framework and an ability to work collaboratively. Effective use of ICT by teachers will actively support personalised learning by enabling and supporting multiple entry points for a diversity of learners. The College will continually support teachers to develop skills and practices that harness the power of ICT.

The physical redevelopment of the College has delivered innovative learning spaces that no longer constrict the use of ICT. Students and teachers have access to a wide range of technologies across the entire College. This includes wireless networking, technical, audio visual and eLearning support, mobile computer technology, interactive whiteboards, data shows and flexible learning environments. There is universal access to computer peripherals such as cameras and video. The learning spaces and technologies utilised will continue to respond to the innovation in learning as developed by students and teachers.

The College has a whole school 1:1 mobile technology approach which enables all students in Years 7-12 to have access to their own personal mobile device 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At Middle School the iPad has the potential to engage students actively and creatively in their learning through the plethora of quality educational apps available on a device that will enhance student learning outcomes. The iPad is used in classrooms as a companion device in conjunction with our existing computer technology. They do not replace computers but rather increase student technological opportunities.

A BYOD program is operating at Senior School providing anytime, anywhere access to technology and also a powerful stimulus to teachers continually exploring and innovating the use of ICT with their students.

All students concurrently develop their self-concept of digital citizenship and the accompanying values, beliefs and expectations through the Years7-10 Living and Learning Program and personal learning programs throughout the College.

Teachers will be supported with ongoing, developmental professional learning and collegiate support as the College harnesses ICT to move through its next stage of transformation.

**Digital Citizenship**

'Digital citizenship is being able to think critically and make ethical choices about the content and impact on oneself, others, and one's community of what one sees, says, and produces with media, devices, and technologies in online environments'.

The College supports students to develop a positive attitude towards technology applications that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits and productivity. Students need to understand the ethical, cultural and societal issues related to technology and practice responsible use of technology systems, information and software. Responsible digital behavior needs to be embedded with the teaching and learning program to ensure students’ safety, rights and access are protected.

**eSmart** is an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation and aims to make cybersafety a normal part of everybody’s life by equipping them to use technologies in ways that are positive and that protect them from the potential risks.

GWSC became an accredited eSmart School in 2013.

**eSmart** equips everyone in the Glen Waverley Secondary College community with the skills and knowledge
they need for smart, safe and responsible use of technology. It also helps embed a culture of positive technology use, create policies and procedures, gain access to evidence-informed resources and track the College’s progress in becoming eSmart.

**Inquiry Learning**

As well as valuing disciplinary learning, multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary learning in the form of inquiry learning is central to developing student thinking and research skills. Research has shown that ‘inquiry or problem based learning: tapping into students’ particular interests and increased independence’ is a key way to hold the attention of young adolescents and encourage the development of the brain’s frontal lobe – the area associated with reasoning and logical rational decision making. All year 7 students participate in disciplinary learning inquiries in English and Maths. Students are involved in a formal interdisciplinary English/Health learning inquiry in Year 8 and in Year 9 the curriculum is collapsed for 4 weeks and students in each House throughout Semester 2 participate in an interdisciplinary inquiry exploring issues of social justice and sustainability (the ACE program). At each year level there is a common theme which is explored across faculties. At Year 7 the theme is ‘Identity’, at Year 8 ‘Community’ and at Year 9 all students explore the fertile question ‘How can we ensure a sustainable future for our blue planet?’

The Year 9 ACE Program is the culmination of many years of research, reflection and evaluation and employs an inquiry learning approach to examine the complex and multi-faceted issues of social justice and sustainability. All Year 9 students participate in the ACE Program for a four week period in Semester 2 in House groups. During this time students spend all of their core subject time (21 out of 30 periods per week) developing, undertaking and reporting on a research question that they have developed with guidance and direction from facilitating teachers. Students also participate in a range of community service activities. Students continue to participate in their elective classes (9 periods per week) during this time.

To ensure the assessment of the ACE program is authentic the performance of understanding (POU) is a community EXPO to which community members are invited to celebrate learning achievements.

**Living and Learning**

Another very important component of our teaching and learning agenda is our Living and Learning program. Pastoral care was identified as a key component to supporting the learning and well-being of students at this College and is an important component of the Living and Learning Program. Middle Year Research consistently found relationships between teachers and students to be of paramount importance in the connectedness of students to school. A key finding of the Building Relationships, Making Education Work (2001a) research recommended that more time be made available in schools for teachers to cultivate relationships with students because ‘The most important factors connecting young people to school were linked to relationships – friendship with other students and relationships with teachers that involved mutual respect and responsibility (p.7). The inclusion of the Living and Learning Program within the model links the student to a significant adult who has the prime responsibility for the student’s learning and wellbeing. Building a sense of Community, both within the College and with links to the local community is at the heart of our model.

Equally important, the Living and Learning Program at Years 7 - 10 reflects our Vision and Values statement as well as being in line with the Victorian Curriculum and the reporting system. The program centres on students acquiring strategies to become lifelong learners by:

- increasing understanding of their personal learning styles and how they learn
- encouraging effective cooperative, as well as independent, learning skills
- developing resilience and other dispositions which support learning
- shaping their own personal futures
- initiating, maintaining and managing positive social relationships with a diverse range of people in a range of contexts

**Effective Teaching Practice: GWSC Instructional Model**
GWSC has developed a model of teaching and learning that aims to **move the learning forward** for every student, in every lesson, every day. The instructional model captures a collective sense of what great teaching looks like, and is a guide to the development of best practice in the classroom.

The GWSC Instructional Model has four core elements that should be considered when planning and running a lesson:

- engaging students in the learning
- teaching content and/or skills
- using collaboration to move the learning forward
- checking for understanding.

**Effective learning practice: The GWSC Learning Model**

After a period of consultation with staff and students in 2017, Glen Waverley SC launched the new **GWSC Learning Model** in 2018. It aims to clarify a shared understanding of both how individuals learn in general, as well as the learning habits of the most successful learners. This model is used by teachers at GWSC to help students develop strong skills and dispositions as life-long learners.
Curriculum

The curriculum of GWSC is regularly reviewed through Heads of Learning Area meetings. In addition, the Director of Students in the Senior School regularly shares updates from VCAA in relation to any of the VCE study designs, assessment processes or exam details.

Time allocation to learning areas

See Staff Handbook.

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