



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Morwell Park PS is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Morwell Park Primary School is located in the city of Morwell, which is approximately 150km east of Melbourne. Morwell is in an area of high government housing and the school caters for a majority of children from low socio-economic backgrounds. There is a history of generational poverty in the area, with a majority of parents experiencing long term unemployment. Morwell Park has been the largest government primary school in Morwell until 2016, which saw the merger of three smaller Morwell schools into a central location on the old high school site. Both schools now are relatively similar in size each catering for approximately 365-400 children from Morwell.

At Morwell Park children are grouped into one of the seven year levels from Prep to year 6 based on their age / enrolment to school. Staff at the school are allocated to a student year level with most year levels heavily resourced with three teachers and two educational support officers. The school is also resourced with a fulltime principal and assistant principals, part time nurse, a full time social worker and welfare officer, a literacy and numeracy coach and program for students with disability fulltime coordinator. There are four specialist teachers who offer each year level weekly classes in Chinese, Information Technology, Visual Art and Physical Education.

The school has undergone a major building works program in 2016-18. The redevelopment project entailed the construction of an administration area attached to six general classrooms, an art facility, music room and the entire redevelopment of yard play spaces.

In 2017 initial discussions regarding a holistic child centered hub were held with The Coleman Foundation. The foundation recognizes the opportunity and high need to align early childhood services in the Morwell community. To address some of the high welfare and social needs of our community, Morwell Park has employed a full-time social worker and engaged in a pilot program with DHS and Latrobe Community Health to employ a school nurse.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Morwell Park Primary Schools Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community in order to build our future together.

Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our values of cooperation, self-discipline and respect at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Dignity and Respect Statement is available publicly on our school website.

3. Engagement strategies

Morwell Park PS has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

Universal

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing*
- *creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive*
- *welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning*
- *analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, Parent Survey data, student management data and school level assessment data*
- *deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students have subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*

- *teachers at Morwell Park PS use Gradual Release of Responsibility Model as an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction that is evidenced-based and includes high yield teaching practices incorporated into lessons*
- *teachers at Morwell Park PS adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching*
- *our school's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community*
- *carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Junior School Council and other forums including student meetings and curriculum specific programs. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leader, Assistant Principal, Principal and members of the wellbeing team, including the social worker whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through interactive learning, lunchtime activities, athletics, music programs and peer support programs*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Social Worker, Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind.*
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, interactive learning, recess and lunchtime activities)*
- *buddy programs*

Targeted

- *each year group has a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year*
- *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*

Individual

- *Student Support Groups*
- *Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*

- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Social Worker and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Lookout*

Morwell Park PS implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- *building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
- *meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school*
- *developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan*
- *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up*
- *referring the student to:*
 - *school-based wellbeing supports (including Social Worker)*
 - *Student Support Services*
 - *Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst*
 - *Re-engagement programs such as Navigator*

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- *being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing*
- *collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student*
- *monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
 - *with a disability*
 - *in Out of Home Care*
 - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Morwell Park PS is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Morwell Park PS will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- *personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment*
- *attendance records*
- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*

- *attendance, detention and suspension data*
- *engagement with families*
- *self-referrals or referrals from peers*

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Dignity and Respect Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Student rights:

- **Learning** - The right to learn and be taught without disruption
- **Safety** - The right to be safe and to feel safe from physical or verbal violence or be exposed to harmful items
- **Relationships** - The right to receive care, respect, encouragement and fair treatment
- **Property** - The right to expect that individuals property and school property will be safe and not to be taken without permission or purposefully damaged

Student responsibilities:

- **Learning** –The responsibility to not disrupt the learning of others
- **Safety** – The responsibility to not use or threaten physical or verbal violence and not to bring harmful items to school
- **Relationships** – The responsibility to treat people with care, respect, fairness and cooperation
- **Property** – The responsibility to not take other people's or the school property without permission or damage it on purpose

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with our Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Morwell Park PS will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- *warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate*

- *teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *restorative practices*
- *detentions*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Morwell Park PS values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Morwell Park PS will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that may be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data - GradeXPert
- parent survey
- Wellbeing team case data
- CASES21 - reports
- SOCS – referrals and reports

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Bullying Prevention Policy, Commitment to Child Safety

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in term 3, 2018 and is scheduled for review in term 3, 2020.