

# Moonee Ponds West Primary School



## Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact MPWPS reception on 9370 6875 or email:

[moonee.ponds.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:moonee.ponds.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au)

### 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.

Moonee Ponds West Primary School 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, where student participation is encouraged and valued, 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.

### CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy, and vision
3. Mental health, wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behaviour expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

# POLICY

## 1. School profile

Located in the quiet residential area of Moonee Ponds in Melbourne's inner southwestern region, Moonee Ponds West Primary School has been serving the community since 1888. With a rich 136 - year history, the school has preserved significant heritage buildings such as the Library and Hall.

The school has a range of learning spaces to support curriculum opportunities, including inviting classrooms, a gym, Art Room, Japanese Room, Library and music performance spaces. Thanks to state funding received in 2022, the school underwent a significant modernisation project, including the redevelopment of the Hall and Library buildings and improvements to playgrounds. These upgrades aim to further enhance the learning environment, with new facilities designed to support the latest teaching practices and student well-being. There are new additions to the buildings, including a Curiosity space, to support science and cooking based activities.

Guided by our vision *"We think, create, and learn together"*, we foster a culture of respect, collaboration, creativity and resilience. These core values were redeveloped and will become integrated into every aspect of school life, helping students develop not just academically, but as engaged, thoughtful members of society.

Our curriculum is designed to meet the diverse needs of our students. In addition to classroom learning, we offer specialist programs in Physical Education (PE), Creative Arts, and Japanese Language, providing students with opportunities to explore and develop their talents. The school structure is predominantly multi-aged classes of two-year levels with teachers housed in Professional Learning Teams (PLT's), which allows for collaborative planning to occur.

Through the Moonee Vale Instrumental Music Program, students have the chance to learn various instruments during school hours, culminating in performances such as the MPW Soiree and the annual Combined School concert. These activities promote creativity, confidence, and teamwork.

At Moonee Ponds West, we value the strong partnership between students, parents, and staff. We encourage families to actively engage in school life, contributing to student success and well-being. Our parents support students' educational outcomes by volunteering in the class, on excursions and camp and supporting community and fundraising events through the year. Our school grounds are also a valuable community resource, available for use by local groups and families after school hours.

## 2. School values, philosophy, and vision

Moonee Ponds West Primary School's Vision, Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff, and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values at every opportunity.

### **Our Vision is:**

We Think, Create and Learn Together

### **Our Purpose Statement is:**

Young people will leave Moonee Ponds West Primary School as knowledgeable, independent, critical thinking individuals, able to take their place in the world with capacity and courage to create a better future. The MPWPS community does this by nurturing compassion, creativity and a love of learning.

**Our School Values are:** Collaboration, Respect, Creativity and Resilience

### 3. Mental health, wellbeing and engagement strategies

Moonee Ponds West Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote student engagement and wellbeing. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. 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.

As a school, we implement positive whole school, universal practices that help to create an inclusive, supportive and engaging school climate. These practices build the conditions for optimal student learning, development and wellbeing. The following are the initiatives and programs that the school adopts, building the foundation for Tier 2 (cohort specific) and Tier 3 (individual student) practices.

| <b><i>Universal Tier 1 strategies to support Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing at MPWPS:</i></b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>School vision, values and purpose statement</b>                                           | This drives everything we do at MPWPS, and we encourage our students to live our school values through their behaviours.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Rights &amp; responsibilities framework</b>                                               | Supports school wide consistency in understanding our rights and responsibilities as learners at MPWPS.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships</b>                                       | Supports our whole school approach to respect and equity, with lessons taught weekly, and concepts revised frequently across the year.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>School-wide behaviour expectations</b>                                                    | Supports consistency in behaviour expectations and management across the school, as well as consistent language for teachers and students.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Restorative practices: restorative chats and class meetings</b>                           | Allows teachers to scaffold conversations with students to support conflict resolution and rebuilding of relationships.<br><br>Enables students to have a voice in things that matter in their classroom as well as share their feelings and work together to make improvements to their learning environment. |
| <b>Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative</b>                                           | Trained teachers that support a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Learning to Learn program</b>                                                             | Supports the development of positive classrooms at the beginning of the school year.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Buddies program</b>                                                                       | Provides opportunities for students from different year levels to connect and form positive relationships. It supports problem solving and collaboration.                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Hall program (F-2)</b>                                                                    | A program that incorporates the teaching of Curriculum aligned skills, including how to develop empathy, use interpersonal skills to develop and maintain respectful relationships and learn how to work effectively in a team.                                                                                |
| <b>Junior School Council</b>                                                                 | Provides opportunities for students from different year levels to collaborate on a common task, develop leadership skills and make new relationships.                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Lunchtime Clubs</b>                                                                       | Opportunities to engage in interest-based activities, as well as form positive relationships                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Attendance procedures and processes</b>                                                   | Procedures and processes to ensure students are attending school on a regular basis and engaging in learning opportunities.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>School Policies</b>                                                                       | Supports schools to comply with the Child Safe Standards and respond to signs of child abuse. Policies to support a consistent approach to bullying.                                                                                                                                                           |

### **Engagement opportunities**

Moonee Ponds West Primary School implements a range of programs to support student engagement, inclusion, school attendance and positive behaviours. Strong links will be made with our community whenever possible. Some of these opportunities have previously included:

- Victorian High Ability Program
- Tournament of the Minds
- Australian Mathematics competition
- Instrumental programs including Moonee Vale Instrumental Program / Sound garage
- Premiers Reading Challenge
- Sporting programs – swimming, athletics, cross country
- eSmart – cyber bullying program

### **Tier 2 strategies – Early intervention and cohort specific**

Teachers work to monitor the wellbeing of students in their class, and as a team, they collaboratively identify and monitor students who may need additional support within the year level.

| <b><i>Tier 2 strategies for early intervention and cohort specific support:</i></b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Social Skills groups</b>                                                         | To support groups of students in further developing their social and emotional skills, as well as emotional regulation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Check ins</b>                                                                    | Conducted by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader or trusted adult in the school on a frequent basis.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Zones of Regulation</b>                                                          | Supports groups of students in identifying how they are feeling and developing strategies to use when experiencing different emotions.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Out of Home Care</b>                                                             | Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on <a href="#">Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care</a> , including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment. |
| <b>Students with a Disability</b>                                                   | Students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on <a href="#">Students with Disability</a> , such as through reasonable adjustments, consultation with families and where required, SSG's and IEP's                                         |
| <b>Koorie Students</b>                                                              | Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander culture.                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Students who identify as LGBTIQ+</b>                                             | Continuing to provide a positive and respectful learning environment for students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and following the Department policy <a href="#">LGBTIQ Student Support</a> .                                                                                                                                                              |

### **Tier 3 strategies – Individuals or small groups of students**

These are tailored and targeted to individuals or small groups or students who are identified as requiring intensive, tailored mental health support to engage positively in education.

| <b><i>Tier 3 Practices for individual or small groups of students</i></b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Student Support Groups (SSG's)</b>                                     | SSG's support students with disabilities / vulnerabilities/barriers to engage in school. These groups consist of families / carers, school staff, and at times, allied health or Student Support Services staff.                                                           |
| <b>Behaviour Support Plans (BSP's)</b>                                    | Developed with students, families, allied health professionals and school staff to support students who are experiencing behavioural challenges.                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Individual Education Plans (IEP's)</b>                                 | A plan developed by teachers to support the educational needs of students working well below the expected level.                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Student Support Services (SSS)</b>                                     | The SSS team omprises of a broad range of professionals including psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers. They support schools in assisting children and young people facing barriers to learning to achieve their educational and developmental potential. |
| <b>Other school-based supports</b>                                        | The school currently employs a Speech Pathologist one day per week, who works both with individuals and small groups of students. We offer literacy intervention, primarily to F-2 students, which is facilitate by a school teacher.                                      |

### **4. Identifying students in need of support**

Moonee Ponds West Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Our school leadership team and Wellbeing team play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies that help identify students in need of support and enhance wellbeing. MPWPS will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness, and motivation
- attendance and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- referrals from allied health and other external professionals.

## 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.

Moonee Ponds West Primary School's Rights and Responsibilities Framework ensures a consistent approach and a shared understanding of our rights and responsibilities as a school community. This framework is underpinned by our belief in developing the whole child. As part of developing a positive classroom culture, it is an expectation that teachers and students develop classroom rights and responsibilities during term one of each year. These documents are to be displayed and shared with the school community.

With rights and responsibilities, come natural and logical consequences if these are not adhered to. The aim is to empower students to reflect on and modify their behaviour to be part of a happy and safe community.

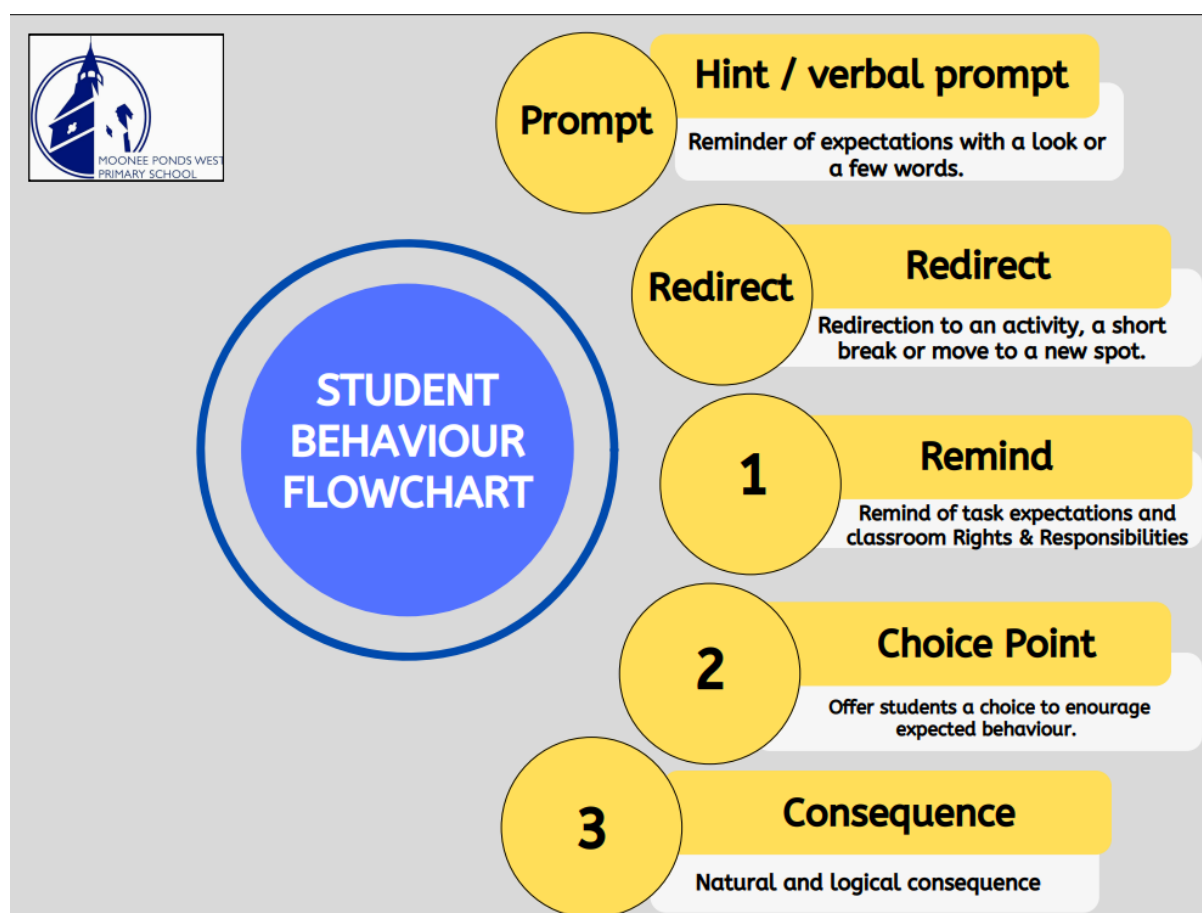
| MPWPS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES |                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| We have the right to              | We have the responsibility to                                                                                                                          |
| Learn                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>be ready to learn</li></ul>                                                                                      |
| Be safe                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>be safe and keep others safe</li></ul>                                                                           |
| Feel included                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>be accepting of others</li><li>celebrate each other's uniqueness</li></ul>                                       |
| Be treated with respect           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>listen to others and have others listen to us</li><li>care for community members, spaces, and property</li></ul> |

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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

## 6. Student behaviour expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's values of Respect, Collaboration, Resilience and Creativity. Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

All students have a right to learn. This means that if a student is making it difficult for a teacher to teach or students to learn, teachers have a known process to follow and consistent strategies to implement. Our behaviour flowchart is shared with the students and displayed in all classrooms. teachers ensure that they use logical consequences to address student's behaviour.



When a student acts in breach of the behaviour expectations of our school, teachers follow the staged response as set out in our Student Behaviour Flowchart. As part of this response, teachers apply logical, known consequences to student's actions. Consequences for children will be considered individually and may involve:

- Parents/carers being contacted, and a meeting arranged to discuss these behaviours
- Loss of Free Activity Time (FAT)
- Restorative conversation with the teacher or leadership
- Development of a Behaviour Support Plan
- Counselling and other support
- Withdrawal/ exclusion from classroom /yard

### **Restorative Conversations:**

Where appropriate, a restorative meeting or conversation will be undertaken with a student who is displaying inappropriate behaviours to set the terms of reintegration into the classroom after a fixed period of exclusions or temporary removals. A restorative conversation allows teachers and students to unpack problems that may provide context to the behaviour. Re-entering a class is to be positive and the relationship with the teachers is restored.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class. 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.

Suspension, expulsion, and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged eight or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training. The Principal of Moonee Ponds West Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21. Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

## **7. Engaging with families**

Moonee Ponds West Primary School 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, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families 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

Moonee Ponds West Primary School 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 will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case Management System (SOCS)

## 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 as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies and documents are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Guidelines
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

#### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

|                            |                                             |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Policy last reviewed       | August, 2025                                |
| Consultation               | School Council                              |
| Approved by                | School Council 25 <sup>th</sup> August 2025 |
| Next scheduled review date | August 2027                                 |