Mulgrave Primary School

Student Engagement & Well-Being Policy

Updated Aug 2018

*Developed in consultation
with the wider school community.*

To be read in conjunction with
*Effective Schools are Engaging Schools –
Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

**Principal: Charles Spicer
School Council President: Ed Meszaros**

Table of contents

1 School profile statement

Mulgrave Primary School is set on large, well maintained spacious grounds. The physical environment of the school is very pleasing and boasts lots of space for children to play and interact with each other. The school has an oval and soccer pitch, quality playgrounds, basketball court, sandpits and beautifully established gardens which are cared for by our students and members of the school community. We pride ourselves on the great school community we have at Mulgrave Primary School and foster the partnerships between home and school. Parents are most welcome in our classrooms and to actively be involved in the school.

At Mulgrave Primary School, a strong emphasis is placed on consolidating the fundamentals of learning with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy. The school is extremely well resourced in the area of computer technology with every classroom having the use of an Interactive Whiteboard which is used daily by both students and teachers. We have a mix of desktops, laptops, netbooks and ipads being used by students across the school. Our teachers have a wide range of skills and expertise and are encouraged to further their own personal learning to ensure that we are continuing to provide the best teaching and learning opportunities for all. The Leadership team regularly undertake quality professional learning also. All staff members are passionate about catering for the individual needs of our students, preparing them for their future.

Our school philosophy is to provide a caring, stimulating and supportive environment that enhances learning, personal growth and wellbeing for all students; extending and challenging students to become effective and productive members of the global society and ensuring that each student reaches their individual potential. We endeavour to create a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe and a school culture that provides policies and procedures that support the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Classroom programs are enriched and supported by Specialist programs that are conducted in Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Science and LOTE (Mandarin). Continuous improvement in all areas of teaching and learning is a high priority for Mulgrave Primary School.

Our school motto is – "Striving for the best in everything we do".

In acknowledging the diversity of learning styles, cultures, interests and talents, the school provides a wide range of enrichment opportunities including: swimming, sporting clinics, interschool sport, perceptual motor program, camping program, instrumental music, recorder, choir, a bi-annual whole school musical production, curriculum based incursions/excursions, student leadership including Junior School Council, Health Education, values program, buddies program, peer support, library and opportunities for extension programs outside of school hours.

Technological literacies and the ability to process information are acknowledged as essential skills. An efficient and effective computer network system enables all classrooms and specialist areas access to Internet, Intranet, multi-media programs and equipment and learning software. Our school is well supported by an enthusiastic community, an effective School Council and committees and a Parents Association which successfully co-ordinate a range of community and fundraising activities. In acknowledging that a team of students, staff and parents working together produces the best educational outcomes, the school strongly encourages parent participation in many capacities. Parents participate in school maintenance and beautification activities, work voluntarily in the uniform store and contribute directly to learning programs such as literacy, numeracy, sport, camps and excursions. A strong partnership between home and school encourages school community members to work together to provide an educational facility of quality for the Mulgrave community. The staff team at Mulgrave Primary School is characterised by enthusiasm, hard work, collegiate support and dedication to professional growth. There is a strong blend of experience, enthusiasm and energy. All staff members are expected to share a strong commitment to engaging and effective teaching and learning pedagogy

and to the wellbeing of the children in their care. They work successfully in professional learning teams to provide exemplary learning programs that offer rich and engaging opportunities for students.

Our approach to teaching and learning aims to meet individual learning needs and to maximise each child's potential. It aims to enable students to:
• Experience a broad curriculum
• Be literate and numerate
• Learn in a variety of ways
• Find their learning satisfying in situations that provide opportunities for success
• Actively participate in experiences that integrate inquiry and understanding with practical experience
• Develop thinkers who work independently and collaboratively
• Use Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as creative tools for learning
• Develop confidence in their abilities and be able to define values, express ideas, formulate opinions and become self-extended learners
• Co-operate with others to develop desirable attitudes and interests that can continue beyond school

Mulgrave Primary School – School Goals – (taken from School Strategic Plan 2014-2017)

Achievement
- To improve student achievement across the whole curriculum, particularly in English and Mathematics, ensuring that **all** students across **all** ability levels have the opportunity to reach their individual potentials.

Engagement
- To develop highly motivated, inspired and engaged students who are excited about learning and strive to achieve their personal best.

- To continue the ongoing development of the school as a vibrant learning community involving strong partnerships between the school, students, parents and the broader community.

Wellbeing
- To support high levels of student wellbeing and resilience and implement programs which improve student connectedness to peers and to the school.

Productivity
- To improve the allocation and performance of resources (human, financial, space and materials) to meet the priorities identified in the 2014 – 2017 SSP, maximising achievement, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for all students.

2 Whole-school prevention statement

At Mulgrave Primary School we promote the following core values which reflect the beliefs we hold about how children learn, how our school operates and how we each relate to each other.

MOTIVATED - Approach all tasks with a positive, enthusiastic attitude and a belief that you can be a great learner.

PERSISTENT- Never give up, even when things are challenging.

SUCCESSFUL- At MPS, we are proud of our school, we work hard, are honest, tolerant, persistent and motivated.

In addition to the values, the school sets out the following rules:

RESPECT: Always show respect for yourself and others, accepting everybody equally and remembering our manners.

1. **SAFETY:** Be aware of what is around you at all times and behave, learn and play in a safe manner.

2. **LISTEN:** Listen attentively to your teachers and peers at all times.

3. **RESPONSIBILITY:** Always take ownership of your behaviour, words and actions and realise that your choices impact on others.

4. **RESILIENCE:** being able to cope with challenging situations and make good choices.

At Mulgrave Primary School our Student Engagement and Wellbeing goal is -

- **To build the capacity of students to be motivated and engaged personal learners by improving student abilities in self-managing their social and learning behaviours.**

To achieve our goal in this area we foster maximum levels of student engagement and student attendance. A variety of programs and strategies are implemented to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours incorporating cognitive, emotional and behavioural elements.

***School targets (annual) in this area are as per the current Annual Implementation Plan.

This broad range of programs, processes and strategies in place at the school include:
- A whole-school Start Up Program at the beginning of every year where students contribute to their class mission statements and take part in activities that promote harmonious relationships in all aspects of school life
- Engaging classroom programs with particular emphasis on Inquiry Learning and higher order thinking
- Regular use of contemporary ICT based on current best practice
- Engaging specialist programs that include Art, Music, Science, Physical Education, Library and LOTE. (Mandarin)
- Restorative Practices at all levels including circle time strategy
- Recognition of individual achievements for both in school and out of school activities
- Whole School Buddy Program
- Individual Behaviour Plans as required
- Individual Learning Improvement Plans
- A Program for Students with Disabilities which promotes an inclusive and welcoming school
- community and where difference is celebrated
- Parent-teacher interviews and three-way conferences
- Sporting Teams
- Prep-6 swimming program (every second year)
- Senior Student Leadership Program and Roles of Responsibility
- Junior School Council Years - 3-6
- Regular displays of student work from all levels around the school
- Uniform Policy – universal wearing of school uniform
- Environmental programs
- House System
- Drug Education Program
- Year 6 Puberty Program
- Kinder to Prep Transition Program that involves parents in social and professional development
- activities throughout the year
- Year 6-7 Transition Program
- Year 6 Graduation celebration
- Premier's Reading Challenge

- Extra curricula programs that include instrumental music
- A comprehensive excursion and incursion program
- Camping programs
- Parents' Association activities
- School newsletter and website

3 Rights and responsibilities

3.1 Guiding principles

Every member of the school 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 Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* 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. Please refer to the Act for specific details.

3.3 The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:
- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter 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. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural Rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DET employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:
- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the VRQA review process.

3.4 Students with disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

Mulgrave Primary School will make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with 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.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

3.5 Bullying and harassment

Definitions
Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

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.

It is important for the school 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 and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

The effects of harassment or bullying include
•   poor health – anxiety, depression
•   lower self esteem
•   reduced study performance
•   missed classes, social withdrawal
•   reduced career prospects

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable. Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Subtle: (The most common)
They include:
• Offensive staring and leering.
• Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference.
• Racist or smutty comments or jokes.
• Questions about another's sexual activity.
• Persistent comments about a person's private life or family.
• Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body.
• Offensive name calling.

Explicit: (obvious)

They include:
•   Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc.
•   Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing.
•   Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal.
•   Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail.
•   Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks.
•   Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography.
•   Requests for sexual favours.
Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

Bullying can involve such things as
•   grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving.
•   publicly excluding a person from your group
•   taking or breaking a person's property
•   knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
•   teasing a person because of their looks

Cyberbullying

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:

• the language you use and the things you say
• how you treat others
• respecting people's property (eg copyright)

- visiting appropriate places.

Behaving safely online means:

- protecting your own privacy and personal information (we used to call it 'stranger danger')
- selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- being proactive in letting someone know if there is something is 'not quite right'. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher.

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.
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that you feel comfortable with.
- Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have a right to: - 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 - participate fully in the school's educational program	Students have a responsibility to: - 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. - Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. - 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. - Students should, with support, be expected to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the

	school community.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
• 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	Parents/carers have a responsibility to: • promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours. • Ensure their child's regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning. • support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
Teachers have a right to • expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student	Teachers have a responsibility to • fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. • Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively. • Know the content they teach. • Know their students. • Plan and assess for effective learning. • Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. • use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

4. Shared expectations

At Mulgrave Primary School there are high expectations of students in regards to both their learning and their behaviour. The school endeavours to promote a strong sense of belonging to an active community of learners. Students will act safely and responsibly in the playground and the classroom and treat all people with respect. Mulgrave Primary School endeavours to raise school community awareness of what makes students resilient and helps them to develop strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and increase coping skills. Our shared high expectations have been endorsed by the whole-school community.
These shared expectations are:

- jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students
- clear and specific
- focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
- focused on prevention and early intervention
- supported by relevant procedures
- consistent, fair and reasonable
- linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

Schools 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.

The school'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 Practices
The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practices:
- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution

(Braithwaite 2001b)

- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are 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 (Morrison 2002).

Diversity in the school community

The school aims to address diversity by:

- maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
- attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

Child Safe Standards - 2016

The wider school community is informed and adheres to the conditions of the Child Safe Standards 2016 policies, code of conduct and practices.

5. School actions and consequences

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
- corporal punishment is not part of any consequence under any circumstances

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, 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,
- involving the student wellbeing coordinator, managed individual pathways or careers coordinators
- tutoring/peer tutoring
- 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 procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in **Effective Schools are Engaging Schools Student Engagement Policy Guidelines** . Appendices 12 to 18 of the guidelines provide flowcharts and proformas for use in suspension and expulsion procedures.

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 (See Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines for process required).

References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/

Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf