



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY

Mitcham Primary School

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.

Mitcham 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 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

School profile

Mitcham Primary School is a medium sized government Primary School located in the eastern suburbs. The student population is quite diverse. The school has a large number of single parent families, as well as a relatively high proportion of families who are economically disadvantaged, and a high proportion of families from non-English speaking backgrounds.

These demographics present the school with a unique challenge in terms of student engagement and wellbeing. The staff are aware of each individual student's background and effectively use Individual Learning Plans to meet students' needs and consistently achieve a higher than expected level of engagement, behaviour and achievement.



School values, philosophy and vision

Mitcham Primary School's values are Respect, Confidence, Getting Along, Persistence and Organisation.

Mitcham Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Mitcham Primary School support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

This policy outlines our school's vision, mission, objective, values and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our staff induction handbook, and enrolment/transition packs.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

- display posters and banners that promote your values in our school
- celebrate our values in our school newsletter
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies.

Mitcham Primary School's vision is to create Learners, Leaders, Thinkers.

Mitcham Primary School core purpose is to promote the development of active thinkers with communication and technology skills for the future.

Engagement strategies

Mitcham Primary School 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.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

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, and school level assessment data



- deliver a broad curriculum including Indonesian, Physical Education, Performing Arts and Visual Arts to ensure that students are able to participate in subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Mitcham Primary School use a GANAG instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Mitcham Primary School 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 "You Can Do It" 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 and celebrate 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 Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through athletics, music programs, peer support programs, and buddies for all year levels
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the their classroom teachers, yard duty teachers, peer support mentors, Year Group 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. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
 - Power of One
 - You Can Do It
 - Bounce Back
- programs, school visits and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. behaviour management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

Targeted

- each year group has a Level Coordinator, 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 have an Individual Learning Plan, and if necessary 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, see:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx>
- Individual Learning Plans and Behaviour Support Plan
- program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace

Mitcham Primary School 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
 - 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

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 and celebrating 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:
 - o with a disability
 - o in Out of Home Care
 - o and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Identifying students in need of support

Mitcham Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing.



Mitcham Primary School 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 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, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- anecdotal notes about behaviour for particular students in need

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 Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education and receive a full days learning
- have the opportunity to reach their potential
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- to get along with others and learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- to be respected and able to express their ideas, feelings and concerns.
- to have uninterrupted learning.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- try their hardest and work to the best of their abilities
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- include, support, help and share with others
- respect the right of others to learn.
- 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.

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 Mitcham Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mitcham Primary School 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
- targeted Intervention for individual students based on data
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- formation of a Student Support Group focusing on restorative practices to improve relationships
- behaviour reviews
- suspension (In-school or Out-of-school as appropriate)
- expulsion.

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

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

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

Engaging with families

Mitcham 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 with homework and 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.

Evaluation

Mitcham 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

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Child Safe Standards

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 12/06/2018 and is scheduled for review in June 2020.

This policy was ratified by the School Council on: 12/06/18