



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.

Macedon 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

1. School profile

Macedon Primary School is located 60 kilometres north-west of Melbourne and serves the semi-rural community of Macedon. Established in 1869, the school maintains a current enrolment of 272 students and draws additional enrolments from nearby postcodes predominately from south of Woodend. In recent years, Macedon has experienced a slow and steady increase in young families moving into the area. There is a considerable level of parent participation in various aspects of the school with the school special outdoor education and environmental activities well supported.

Currently, there are 22 staff members; a principal, 11 full-time teachers, 3 part-time teachers and 5 part-time educational support, comprising of 3 integration aides and 2 office staff. The part time

teachers provide specialist programs in Art, Physical Education, Performing Arts, Languages (Indonesian) and Literacy/Numeracy support. The Leadership team comprises of the Principal and 2 Leading Teachers who drive the improvement agenda for all aspects of the curriculum (teaching, learning and assessment practices), whilst staff work in Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to collectively plan the programs that support student academic, social, emotional and physical growth. The principal also works collectively with School Council to foster a community approach to educating the students, holding a shared belief that building learning communities is the best approach. Macedon Primary has a collective commitment to growing the whole child.

The school motto, **“Caring, Learning, Sharing”**, encapsulates the ethos of the school community and the following mission statement underpins the strategic direction and decisions that are made to improve the School as a learning community:

To provide comprehensive and innovative programs to enable our children to reach their full potential and to equip them with the skills and knowledge to become lifelong learners. To develop in children a sense of resilience and the ability to value themselves and others. To encourage the qualities of initiative, persistence and excellence to be successful in an ever changing world.

The school values outline the behaviours and attitude we hope to see in all members of the school community to foster the ideal learning environment for the students:

- Respect: Showing care for yourself, others, property and the environment
- Responsibility: Being accountable for your words and actions
- Creativity: Producing original ideas and using your imagination
- Integrity: Being honest, sincere and trustworthy
- Teamwork: Working together and learning collaboratively

The school is fully committed to the KidsMatter framework being a proactive initiative focusing on children’s mental health and wellbeing; the school values are a crucial element of the KidsMatter whole school approach.

The school offers an attractive and engaging learning environment with the school undergoing a refurbishment (admin areas) and rebuild (classrooms) in 2003. The well maintained grounds include an adventure track, various climbing equipment and oval for active play, as well as numerous passive play areas including a dry creek bed and multiple sand pits. Middle Gully is a 1.6 hectare environmental reserve across the road, which boasts a solar powered eco-shed, vegetable and herb gardens, chook pen, dam and wetlands. The reserve is the key resource for the school’s focus on environmental and outdoor education.

Environmental education and sustainability are embedded in the curriculum through regular hands-on learning activities, grade level study topics and a kitchen garden program. Long term scientific investigations focusing on local flora, fauna and natural resources are also being developed. A weekly parent based Landcare program supports the Middle Gully Environmental initiatives. There is a strong emphasis on outdoor education involving camping in tents, hiking, bike riding and orienteering. These activities are aligned with the school based camping program from Foundation to Year 6 where they explore the local landscape on bushwalks and bike rides in the older grades. Students in years 3-6 attend external camps in locations throughout Victoria providing more outdoor educational experiences and opportunities to study contrasting environments in great depth.

The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities including instrumental music tuition in keyboard on Mondays and Guitar on Fridays. These user pay programs are utilised by many families from Grade 1 upwards. School Council operate an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) service with both the before and after care programs becoming more popular in recent years as families juggle the challenge of work-family commitments.

Macedon Primary is a community school, not just in words but in the attitudes, actions and values we endeavour to uphold with everyone, every day.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Macedon Primary School's Statement of 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 of respect, responsibility, creativity, integrity and teamwork at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to provide comprehensive and innovative programs to enable our children to reach their full potential and to equip them with the skills and knowledge to become lifelong learners. To develop in children a sense of resilience and the ability to value themselves and others. To encourage the qualities of initiative, persistence and excellence to be successful in an ever changing world.

Our Values are:

- Respect: Showing care for yourself, others, property and the environment
- Responsibility: Being accountable for your words and actions
- Creativity: Producing original ideas and using your imagination
- Integrity: Being honest, sincere and trustworthy
- Teamwork: Working together and learning collaboratively

3. Engagement strategies

Macedon 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 to ensure that students engage in programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers at Macedon Primary School use school designed instructional models 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 Macedon 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 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 Student Council and other forums including class meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and the Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school productions, athletics, music and the buddy program*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Classroom teachers or the 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:*
 - *Respectful Relationships*
 - *Bully Stoppers*
 - *E-safe*
- *programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. cyber safety or preparation for puberty 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 Year Group Leader/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 (KESO)*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *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 Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Lookout*

Macedon 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 students 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 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

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

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- 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.

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 Macedon Primary School's Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Macedon 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, moving a student for a short period of time to a different classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *restorative practices*
- *periods of the time out of the yard during recess and lunchtime*
- *communicating with parent/carer to follow up*
- *suspension*
- *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.

7. Engaging with families

Macedon 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
- 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.

8. Evaluation

Macedon 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
- SOCS

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

[Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)

[Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedures](#)

[Child Safe Policy](#)

[Child-Safe-Standard-1-Role-of-Child-Safety](#)

[Child-Safe-Standard-2-Statement-of-Commitment-to-Child-Safety](#)

[Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 30th July 2020 and is scheduled for review in August 2022.