POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2025
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2027

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Help for non-English speakers
If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Mount Eliza North 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.

Mount Eliza North 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. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

POLICY

1. SCHOOL PROFILE

Mount Eliza North Primary School is situated on a large tract of hilly land bordered by an extensive nature reserve. It is located in the Mornington Peninsula suburb of Mount Eliza, 5 kilometres from Frankston and 45 kilometres from the centre of Melbourne. The school was opened in November 1976 and was built to an architecturally designed plan incorporating many open plan teaching and learning spaces. The main building encompasses a multi levelled information research facility and is complimented by our state of the art

gymnasium; music complex and extensive grounds. Thirteen portable classrooms have been installed at various stages to cater for the growing student population.

Mount Eliza North Primary School accesses a variety of data in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of the school community and the engagement and wellbeing needs of the students and their families. Mount Eliza North Primary School serves a generally advantaged community and our relatively high socio-economic status is expected to continue. The students, in the main, come from the immediate area; however, the school is the preferred choice for many families who live outside the area.

The playground provides extensive areas for students in a unique, rural setting whilst the vast grounds provide ample provision for outdoor activities. The playgrounds include an oval, synthetic soccer field and games area, a basketball/netball court, additional asphalt areas and purpose built play equipment for each sub school. The school has six large water tanks for irrigation purposes. The school has a purpose-built gymnasium and music complex and a large, refurbished section of the playground.

The school is organised into three sub schools: Junior School (Prep to Year 2), Middle School (Years 3 & 4) and Senior School (Years 5 & 6). Mount Eliza North Primary School currently operates 22 classrooms: 9 in Foundation, 7 in Middle School and 6 in the Senior School. We have 2 Learning Specialist Teachers in Literacy & Numeracy and each Sub School has a dedicated Sub School Coordinator. Specialist Programs include: Art, Languages, Music, Library, STEM and Physical Education.

Each classroom is air conditioned and heated. Learning Technologies are a key component of all education programs in the school. Every classroom is computer networked with flat screen multimedia computers. All classrooms in Years 3 – 6 have flat screens, while all Foundation classes have interactive flat screens. Students across the school are able to access iPads or laptops in their classrooms and additional ICT resources to support their learning. The library is a multi-levelled information research facility which has both online resources and a comprehensive range of references, non-fiction and fiction resources.

Mount Eliza North Primary School is a fully accredited International Baccalaureate School which implements the Primary Years Program. This program works to develop the whole child and builds within the students the passion for learning. The school promotes an atmosphere where excellence is valued and in which all children are encouraged to develop to their maximum potential.

This established tradition is maintained through our ongoing commitment to and development of:

- Students who are resilient, well balanced, communicators, knowledgeable, thinkers, risk takers, reflective and inquirers
- High standards and expectations in numeracy and literacy
- A spirit of pride, a sense of belonging and a unity of purpose
- A strong student leadership program
- Children taking responsibility for their own learning and for using action to demonstrate their understanding and commitment
- Students living the five essential elements of the International Baccalaureate curriculum

Learning at Mount Eliza North Primary School takes place in a stimulating and challenging environment. Our curriculum is designed to ensure the fullest educational development with programs focusing on the needs and abilities of each child. An active involvement in the learning process stimulates creativity and curiosity to build a solid foundation for success in the secondary years.

Students benefit from involvement in the school's choir, and participation in instrumental music lessons. Students also have the opportunity to participate in the school band, ensemble and drum band. An extensive student leadership program is provided to promote nurturing and development of organisation, initiative, confidence and responsibility in our students. A proactive Student Representative Council has 2 representatives from all grades and is led by Year 6 SRC Captains.

The school has staff members with a range of experience. Support staff includes office staff, integration aides and a qualified first aid officer on a full time basis. The Mount Eliza North Primary School staff is enthusiastic, supportive and willing to embrace change and take on additional responsibility. Extensive in-house Professional Learning is provided, recognising and utilising staff expertise. Mount Eliza North Primary School regularly hosts PYP meetings and visiting teachers from other schools to observe and learn from our knowledgeable and experienced staff. The image of the school is enhanced due to the high professional

standing of the school staff within our own and broader community.

At Mount Eliza North Primary, we recognise the primary role of the family in education. A strong family-school partnership is a feature of life at Mount Eliza North Primary. This partnership is based on mutual trust and respect, and a shared responsibility for the education of our children.

The Mount Eliza Art & Design Show is the school's major fundraising activity for the year and involves the entire school community. The large parent, staff and friends Art & Design Show Committee is very proactive and meets regularly throughout the year to plan the show. A very proactive Parent and Friends Association also support our school through a variety of fundraising and social events.

The Mount Eliza North Primary School Council meets regularly to discuss issues relating to the governance of the school. Joining the School Council provides parents with the opportunity to voice their opinions on the direction that the school is taking.

Parents are also involved in a wide range of classroom and whole school activities including: support of the literacy and numeracy programs, the PMP program, leading a lunchtime Horizons group, attending camps and excursions, assisting in sporting events such as House Swimming sports, House Athletics sports and supporting the PYP Units of Inquiry. Parents and staff at Mount Eliza North Primary School work together to create opportunities for our students to achieve and excel at whatever they do.

The school has an excellent relationship with the local Walkers Road Kindergarten, our neighbouring primary schools Mount Eliza and Kunyung Primary School and neighbouring secondary schools Mount Eliza Secondary College and Frankston High School. This relationship includes a committed transition program with Walkers Road Kindergarten and Mt Eliza Secondary College.

2. Schools values, philosophy and vision

Mount Eliza North Primary School Values Statement: Mount Eliza North Primary School strives to create a community of learners who are empowered to inquire, achieve and contribute to the world around them.

IBO Mission Statement: The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become compassionate and life long active learners, who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Mount Eliza North 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:

<u>Universal</u>

- 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 and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations

- Teachers at Mount Eliza North Primary School use an 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 Mount Eliza North 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 Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Student Action Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Sub-school Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Sub-school 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
- Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- Buddy programs, Horizons, Play Leaders, Developmental Play Shed

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
- 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 – refer to our Koorie policy for further information.
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school.
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Student Support.
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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 Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- Wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year

- Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plans
- Behaviour - Students
- Behaviour Support Plans
- Student Support Services

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- Disability Inclusion Profile
- Mental health toolkit
- headspace
- Navigator
- LOOKOUT

Mount Eliza North 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
    - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

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

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

4. IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

Mount Eliza North 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. Mount Eliza North 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

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

6. STUDENT BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and student code of conduct. 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.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mount Eliza North Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, 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.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices

- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

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 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Mount Eliza North 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

Mount Eliza North 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.

8. EVALUATION

Mount Eliza North 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
- SOCS
- COMPASS chronicle
- Living Ripples survey

Mount Eliza North Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

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 are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy