



STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

To be read in conjunction with *DET Student Engagement Guidance*

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

Rationale:

Moonee Ponds Primary School endeavours to provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all children. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

This policy outlines the shared expectations of our community in the areas of student engagement, attendance and behaviour. It supports the rights and articulates the expectations of every member of the school community to engage in and promote a safe, supportive and inclusive educational environment. It is supported by our School Mission, Vision and Values.

Aims:

- To provide a positive environment where children feel safe and secure and where a sense of belonging and well-being are strengthened.
- To ensure all teachers assume responsibility for student welfare and that they are confident, skilled and proactive in the management of student welfare issues and able to respond to individual students.
- To develop positive social behaviours and problem-solving skills in our students based on our school values of Respect, Optimism, Care and Collaboration.
- To encourage student voice and agency.
- To implement preventative and early intervention approaches.
- To develop communication processes and protocols that are clear and well known to ensure the effectiveness of student engagement support.
- To ensure that all students and members of our school community understand our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

Implementation:

The Implementation of the Student Engagement Policy is divided up into the following sections:

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations (including School actions and consequences)
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

1. School Profile

Moonee Ponds Primary School was established in 1919 and is located 7.5 km from the city. Our school has long served the local community, first as a primary school, then as a "central" school with students from foundation – year 8. In 2013 the school again became a primary school.

Our school is situated on spacious and well treed grounds which are well appointed with equipment, play and recreation areas. The school leadership and staff enjoy deep support from our parents through an active and

responsive School Council and Parent Association. Most students that attend our school live locally and an increasing number of families walk or ride their bike to school.

Our school is culturally diverse with 25% of families having a language background other than English (LOTE), with the largest LOTE groups being Chinese (Mandarin), Vietnamese and Hindi. The school also has representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our school values of Respect, Optimism, Care and Collaboration drive our Mission and Vision, School Code of Conduct and our curriculum. Our teachers are dedicated to the teaching profession and along with our education support staff, readily embrace the school values.

Our philosophy is based around each student performing at their personal best in all areas of the curriculum. The individual talents of all students are recognised and there is confidence in all students' capacity to learn. We celebrate participation and reward excellence in all endeavours.

With a commitment to maximising the learning growth of every child, we focus on engaging all students in a comprehensive learning program. Our curriculum has a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy. The school curriculum has a strong arts component. The school is part of the Moonee Vale Instrumental Music Program with over 70% of year 3-6 students learning musical instruments.

We provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills through School Captaincy, Student Representative Council membership, Green Team Environmental Leaders, Foundation/Yr 5.6 Buddy Program, House Captaincy and team captaincy in the sports programs. Students are empowered to become active, inspired and courageous citizens.

Our Mission, Vision and Values underpin everything we do. Our School Community regularly engages with our Mission, Vision and Values through the curriculum, the learning environment and home-school partnerships. It is also represented as a published document that can be found displayed around the school, in our strategic documents, referenced in our fortnightly newsletter and published on our School Website at <http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/about-us/>

3. Engagement Strategies

Moonee Ponds 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

Moonee Ponds Primary School promotes engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students through:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising 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
- implementing comprehensive skills-based programs
- implementing a comprehensive transition program
- incorporating students' needs and views into daily classroom activities as appropriate
- ensuring that school organisation and management practices are consultative and collaborative
- ensuring the consistent and fair application of school expectations and

- the introduction of relevant programs such as conflict resolution and decision making

Moonee Ponds Primary School has a vibrant and dynamic school program. As part of the core curriculum, we offer a balanced, comprehensive program across all the domains of the Victorian Curriculum (VC). Our goal is to inspire students' self-motivated learning and equip them with skills in problem solving, self-monitoring, reading and study strategies, and critical thinking. Priority is given to the development of literacy and numeracy, which is supplemented by specialist programs in The Arts, PE and Italian. Our Library is used as a valuable resource as part of our classroom program. Students have access to the Science Room for programs throughout the primary years as part of the curriculum and through events such as Science Week.

Technology plays an integral part in our curriculum with a high level of access across the school. Year 4 to 6 students have 1:1 devices through the eConnect program and in Foundation to Year 3 students use class laptops, iPads and desktop computers in their classrooms as a tool for learning.

The MPPS Establishment Program is run at the commencement of every year and revisited each term. This program guides teachers and students in building a positive class environment, developing classroom expectations, establishing school expectations, helping with goal setting, and developing problem solving strategies.

Teachers at Moonee Ponds Primary School use the GANAG instructional framework by Professor Jane Pollock, to provide an explicit, common and shared model of instruction and to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.

Teachers 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. The school regularly focusses on improvement through 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.

We recognise that all students are different and have individual needs. Students actively engage with their learning, setting goals, providing and reflecting on feedback in order to develop their understanding, skills, effort and approach to learning. 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 team leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning

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. Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents.

Carefully planned transition programs supports students moving into different stages of their schooling. This includes learning environments with consistent structures across the school, cross-aged activities and mentoring, as well as explicit transition and move-up sessions.

Student attendance is monitored with attendance improvement strategies implemented at a whole-school, cohort and individual level.

In addition to our classroom learning programs, we offer a range of enrichment programs to support the engagement of students. These programs have included:

- Student Representative Council
- GATEWAYS
- Tournament of Minds
- University of New South Wales competition
- Moonee Vale Instrumental Program (MVIMP)
- Lunchtime Clubs – Chess and Fencing
- Social Skills Groups
- Premiers Reading Challenge

- The Green Team
- eSmart - cybersmart program
- House Sports carnivals
- Interschool Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country
- Year 5/6 interschool team sport competitions
- Year 5/6 – Foundation buddies
- Foundation – Year 6 Camps program

Targeted

Year level groups are structured in professional learning teams (PLTs) that work as professional learning communities. Every teacher within the PLT structure monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their class and students who may need additional support within the year level. The PLT leader supports the teachers in their team with identifying and monitoring students at risk.

There are programs, incursions and excursions that are developed to address issue or cohort specific behaviour. These have included The Power of One (bully stopping), Zones of Regulation, mPower and revved up, and the Martial Arts Therapy (MAT) Program. Classroom teachers regularly focus on supporting student wellbeing through implementing program such as Mindfulness, and the Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships program across Foundation to Year 6.

All students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment.

Wellbeing and Education Support 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

Moonee Ponds 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 for students at risk or with specific needs
- 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
- 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

Moonee Ponds Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The school leadership team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Our 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
- referrals from allied health and other external professionals involved with the student

5. Rights and Responsibilities

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity.

We view harassment and bullying (including cyberbullying) as serious behaviours that are not to be tolerated at Moonee Ponds Primary School. See Appendix 1 for information on the definition of, impact of and actions regarding this behaviour.

Our students are encouraged to develop strategies that enable them to be resilient and to be active problem solvers. Students are encouraged to follow the Problem-Solving Steps.

<u>The Problem-Solving Steps</u>
STOP
There's a problem
CALM
If you are angry or upset, take a moment to calm down: get a drink, go for a walk, use a mindful tool (breathing etc).
THINK
Think about what you can do to stop the problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ignore the behaviour (unless the situation is dangerous)- Ask the person to stop. Tell them you don't like it- Move away- Involve the teacher (discussion will take place with all people involved)- Negotiate a settlement or decide on consequences
DO
Follow the problem-solving steps to solve the problem
If you ever feel unsafe or are hurt, get help from the teacher straight away!

At Moonee Ponds Primary School, we have clearly defined rights and responsibilities for the whole school community – students, parents and carers and teachers.

Every classroom has a copy of the School Expectations displayed (See Appendix 2). Students are introduced to these at the beginning of each year as part of the MPPS Establishment Program.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team and speak to their parents or carers.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate fully in their education • feel safe, secure and happy at school • learn in an environment free from bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation, where they can fully develop their talents, interests and ambition • express their ideas, feelings and concerns 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate fully in their educational program and to attend regularly • 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 and contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students <p>As they progress through school students 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.</p>

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Parents/carers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expect that their child/ren will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged 	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Teachers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the MPPS Student 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• engage in regular and constructive communication with parents regarding their child's learning

6. Student Behavioural Expectations

Moonee Ponds Primary School aims to promote lifelong learning within the whole school community. The school seeks to provide a rich education for all students whose achievement and wellbeing are at the core of our work together. We do this within the context of our school goals: Respect, Optimism, Care and Collaboration:

- **Respect**
Treat yourself and others with consideration and regard. Be thoughtful and tolerant of one another's point of view and differences. Abide by our school expectations.
- **Optimism**
Be positive. Persist when experiencing difficulty. Set goals and believe that you can accomplish them. Have confidence and look for the positive, even in difficult situations.
- **Care**
Show kindness for yourself and others. Look after your belongings, your classroom and the environment. Take pride in what you do. Show understanding and be considerate of each other's situation, feelings and motives.
- **Collaboration**
Work together towards achieving common goals through demonstrating effective cooperation, communication and problem-solving skills.

The principal, teachers and school staff have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued and cared for, feel part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success. To achieve this, we provide:

- 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

School actions and consequences

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through 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 stimulating curriculum and 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.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, or there is a concern regarding attendance, our School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. This includes:

1. Discussion, investigation and counselling:
 - Establishing a facts-based understanding of the issue or incident
 - Understanding the students' background and needs
 - Counselling that is focused on restorative practises and will give the opportunity for the student to work out a satisfactory solution to his or her problem
2. Logical Consequences:
 - Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students, teachers and parents
 - The student is encouraged to see the connection between behaviour and taking responsibility for their choices and actions

An example of logical consequences linked to the School Expectations is included in Appendix 3.

An informal meeting may be convened by the school at the request of the teacher or parents/carers to exchange information to seek solutions to behavioural problems or student difficulties.

Corporal punishment is not permitted at MPPS and will not be used in any circumstance.

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour: Below is a table with an example of consequences of inappropriate behaviour. These levels are to be used as a guide only and the appropriate consequences to any given behaviour will be at the discretion of the Principal or the nominated representatives according to individual circumstances.

Action	By Whom	Why	When	How (examples)
Cautioning	Duty Teacher	To refocus. To return to appropriate behaviour.	When student's behaviour is disruptive. For example, spoiling games, calling out, interfering with others, not on task	Remind student of appropriate rule. Ask them to return to task
Intervention	Duty Teacher Classroom Teacher	To stop disruptive behaviour.	When behaviour continues after a caution or behaviour is unsafe.	Relocate student within classroom. Walk with yard duty teacher. Extra time in class at recess/lunch.
Teacher and Student Action Plan	Class Teacher Assistant Principal Principal	To assist student to modify unacceptable behaviour.	When a student's behaviour continues to intrude on other students' wellbeing.	Establishing a plan or contract with student and communicating with parents.
External assistance	Class teacher Assistant Principal Principal	To set up and monitor a formal action plan to manage concerns	When the student's behaviour intrudes beyond normal manageable limits.	Parents, Leadership staff and external support services to assist the teacher to

	Student support group (SSG)	about student behaviour.		develop a plan of action.
Suspension	Principal	Action plan has failed to modify seriously disruptive behaviour.	In line with DET guidelines.	In line with DET guidelines.
Expulsion	Principal	Student's behaviour has not changed. Student is deemed to be an unacceptable risk to others.	In line with DET guidelines.	In line with DET guidelines.

Broader responses will include:

- involving and supporting the parents/carers
- 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, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving the year level leader, assistant principal or principal
- involving community support agencies
- withdrawal of privileges
- withdrawal from class
- detention
- yard duty or other duties

Ministerial Order 1125 – Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion

In some situations, it may be necessary to invoke formal discipline procedures to suspend or expel a student. 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>

The following information prepared by the DET outlines the obligations of schools in this process.

Ministerial Order 1125 – Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion, currently defines the grounds for suspension and expulsion of students in Victorian government schools, and the procedures to be followed in relation to suspensions, expulsions, and appeals relating to expulsions. This Ministerial Order and other laws must be interpreted and applied under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. This means that the Ministerial Order must be complied with in a manner which is consistent with the Charter.

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 schoolwork 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

schoolwork 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 – Department policy, available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/supportgroups.aspx> .

7. Engaging with families

Our 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

Our 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
- Student Online Case-Management System (SOCS)

Definitions:

DET	Department of Education and Training
Engage, Engagement	1. To be actively involved in (learning) 2. To excite interest
SSG	Student Support Group meetings comprise of a meeting of the Classroom Teacher, parents, the student (where appropriate) and may include other staff e.g. Team leaders, Engagement and Wellbeing coordinator or Assistant Principal.
Social Skills Groups	A short-term early intervention program for helping children with emotional and behavioural problems to better manage their feelings and behaviour and improve their peer relationships. The program aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance self-esteem and decrease problematic behaviour,• Enhance interpersonal and social skills, and• Promote confidence and resilience by teaching anger and anxiety management, and social skills in small groups.

Staged Response

This reflects that appropriate interventions have taken place at every step when escalating issues.

References:

Ministerial Order 1125	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/MinisterialOrder1125SIGNED.PDF
DET School Policy and Advisory Guide: Student Engagement	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx
Student Wellbeing Hub	https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au
Bully Stoppers	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx
The National Safe Schools Framework	http://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrra2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/the-law/equal-opportunity-act
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/575C47EA02890DA4CA25717000217213/\$FILE/06-024a.pdf
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/professional-responsibilities/conduct-and-ethics

Appendix

1. Harassment and bullying
2. School Expectations as displayed in classrooms
3. General outline of consequences

Evaluation:

This policy will be evaluated on a 4-year review cycle.

Key Person responsible for development of the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy: Principal

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

MAY 2020

Appendix 1: Harassment and Bullying

MPPS has a well-being philosophy which strives to foster a community of mutual respect, optimism, care and collaboration. The Student Engagement Policy has been developed to support this philosophy.

All members of MPPS have the right to feel safe at all times. The school is committed to achieving this and every member of the MPPS community has the responsibility to support and promote this right.

Sometimes it is clear, and therefore easy to identify and agree, when bullying has occurred. But sometimes it is not. Not all distressing or upsetting incidents that occur at School between students involve bullying. The information below provides some guidance on identifying when it is likely that bullying has (or has not) occurred. In some cases, further clarification may be needed from teachers or the principal. This section also provides some examples of common types of bullying.

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 may act anonymously. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

Legislation

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.

Impact

The effects of harassment or bullying include

- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- absences from school
- social withdrawal

Behaviours

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, smutty or sexual comments, jokes and questions
- 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 physical contact
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- Displays of sexually graphic material – pornography
- Extreme forms of harassment can 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)

Some common misconceptions regarding these behaviours:

“I was just mucking around, can't they take a joke?”

This is the most common response to bullying and harassment. It is not a joke to put someone down, ridicule them, and make them feel uncomfortable, push them around or take their things. This is unacceptable behaviour.

“I'll ignore it and it will go away”

If anything, ignoring it makes it worse. It gives the impression that bullying or harassment is OK with you and that you agree with what the bully or harasser is doing.

“I don't want to cause trouble”

Everyone have a right to feel safe at our school. You are not causing trouble; you are standing up for yourself and for your rights.

“It's just a natural part of growing up”

There is nothing natural about being victimized. Students have a right to feel safe at school, as well as at home.

“No-one can do anything about it”

Most cases of bullying or harassment can be sorted out, especially if it is reported straight away. The school is committed to solving these problems.

“Only wusses/sooks dob”

It takes courage and strength of character to stand up for your rights and those of others. Unacceptable behaviour continues when people do nothing.

Actions

All reports about bullying, discrimination or harassment will be regarded seriously, empathetically and dealt with promptly.

Students:

What can I do and where can I go to for help?

Students may take appropriate action by:

- telling the person who is responsible for the inappropriate behaviour to stop
- keeping a written record of events or evidence in the form of text messages, emails etc.
- discussing the situation with someone you trust e.g. parent, teacher, year level leader, assistant principal, and principal (it is important to tell someone who can help)
- do not be afraid to report, retaliation will be regarded very seriously

Do not remain silent. Inappropriate behaviour is never acceptable.

Witnesses and Bystanders

In many respects, the students may be the first to notice what is happening in the school. Whilst staff try to keep informed about what is happening in the school community, bullying or harassment may be so discreet or hidden, that it is not readily apparent to them.

If any student becomes aware of harassment being suffered by another member of the school community (student or staff) he/she should bring the matter to the attention of one of the members of staff so that the matter can be investigated as soon as possible. If a student feels that it would be too embarrassing or upsetting to discuss the matter with one of the contact staff, then he/she should tell his/her parents, so that they may take the appropriate steps.

If you are a witness to bullying, harassment or discrimination:

- don't join in – being witness to or being part of a group which is behaving inappropriately is equally unacceptable
- don't ignore it – report the bullying, harassment or discrimination – so that the person being bullied, harassed or discriminated against can get help, as can the person behaving inappropriately
- try to tell those who are behaving inappropriately to stop

Parents:

Any parent who becomes aware of a bullying or harassment problem or concern should promptly and discreetly bring that to the attention of the school, so that it can be investigated as quickly as possible.

MPPS is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the education of its students, but must to some degree rely upon the input of parents to achieve that objective, particularly in areas where the student is likely only to confide in the parent or close relative or friend.

When there is a bullying or harassment problem, parents should not try to resolve the situation by approaching the students involved or their parents directly (unless there is an immediate safety concern). This can often exacerbate the situation. Please bring the issue to the attention of the school so proper process can be followed.

Staff:

All staff have a duty to ensure that any bullying or harassment brought to their attention or personally witnessed by them is addressed as soon as possible.

All staff have an important role in assisting with the promotion of a culture within the school which clearly defines and actively discourages bullying or harassment of any nature.

How does the School address bullying?

At MPPS we have a whole-school approach to preventing and addressing bullying. The school utilises programs and frameworks such as the "National Safe School Framework", "Alannah and Madeline Foundation", "Bullying no Way"

and the Power of One Anti-Bullying program to create and sustain a safe, supportive and inclusive school community.

Prevention

The School believes that many incidents of bullying can be prevented through the School community by developing clear and common understandings around the issue of bullying.

It is important that we educate all members of the School community about:

- what constitutes bullying, its causes and how to recognise it
- why bullying is not acceptable and that it will not be tolerated
- what to do about suspected incidents of bullying

Strategies at MPPS that prevent bullying and harassment include the following:

- Promote and discuss the 'Student Code of Conduct — Rights and Responsibilities' in each class at the beginning of each year, and at regular intervals throughout the year as part of the MPPS Establishment Program
- Implement wellbeing programs that promote social and emotional knowledge and skill development such as the DET Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships program
- Implement the Alannah and Madeline Foundation 'Better Buddies' program
- Promote whole school connectedness through cross-age and whole school programs and activity days
- Build a positive community and implement strategies and processes as outlined in the Student Wellbeing Hub: <https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au>
- Ensure teachers and staff model and promote positive and respectful relationships

MPPS has ICT protocols in place and contracts that students and parents agree to in order to use ICT as part of the school curriculum. These include:

- information about expectations regarding acceptable use of ICT (Digital Technologies and eSmart Policy)
- cyber-bullying education to all students each year through the ICT program and by signing up to the 'Acceptable Use Agreement'
- safe online learning environment education to help students interact positively online

Supporting and empowering students

Training students to respond assertively to bullying involves supporting and empowering them to deal with distressing or upsetting situations, including bullying. In particular, this may be useful for preventing minor or isolated incidents from escalating into more serious cases of bullying.

Strategies for teachers, staff, parents and carers involve:

- being observant to signs of distress, or suspected incidents of bullying
- listening and providing support to students who are experiencing bullying, and to those engaging in bullying
- encouraging social skills, such as being assertive; telling the bully to stop and seeking help
- trying to understand the reasons for the behaviour and seeking ways to address these issues
- helping students understand the impact of their behaviour on others by encouraging students to take the perspective of the other party e.g. 'How would you feel if ...?'
- encouraging and supporting students to report distressing incidents to a teacher

Kids Helpline is a private and confidential, telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between 5 and 25. Kids can call 1800 55 1800 or on their website at <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/>

Further information and resources regarding bullying is available on the Bullying. No Way! website: <http://bullyingnoway.gov.au>

Formal reporting of specific bullying incidents

Despite the School community's efforts to prevent bullying, some incidents of bullying cannot be satisfactorily addressed through prevention programs alone. In these cases, students and their parents or carers should make a formal report of an incident of bullying to any teacher, or the Principal. Informing the teacher or Principal either verbally or in writing is considered a formal report. All reports will be taken seriously and dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner.

When a bullying incident is reported to the School, the following process will take place:

1. incident of bullying reported to classroom teacher or Principal
2. staff member will interview all students involved and any bystanders to establish facts and will document the findings
3. based on the findings, and factors such as the age of the students involved and the specific circumstances of the incident, an approach for responding to the incident will be selected on a case-by-case basis.

Approaches for responding to bullying:

- Direct sanctions. Sometimes referred to as the Traditional Disciplinary Method. This approach makes use of disciplinary procedures or penalties as a punishment and/or a deterrent to prevent further bullying. These may include verbal reprimands; meetings with parents; temporary removals from class; withdrawal of privileges; school community service; detentions and internal exclusion in a special room; short-term exclusion; and permanent exclusion.
- Serious talks. This approach is used in most schools with students and parents to draw attention to the seriousness of the offence and possible consequences.
- Bully Prevention. Students are repeatedly made aware of what behaviours are unacceptable, including bullying and how, as potential victims, they should respond. When cases need to be handled by teachers, both negative reinforcement for undesirable behaviour and positive reinforcement for desirable behaviour are consistently applied.
- Strengthening the victim. This approach aims at strengthening the victim to resist being bullied. Training may involve instruction in the use of appropriate social skills.
- Mediation. This process employed in a small minority of suitable cases requires the unforced cooperation of both the person who has been engaging in bullying and the target of the bullying in seeking a solution using the services of a trained mediator.
- Restorative Approaches. These involve getting the bully, sometimes termed the 'offender' or 'perpetrator' to reflect upon his or her unacceptable behaviour, experience a sense of remorse and act to restore a damaged relationship with both the victim and the school community. Often used in schools as an alternative to a more punitive approach, its application may take place (i) at a meeting with just the bully and the victim (ii) with a group or class of students involved in bullying behaviour or (iii) at community conference attended by those involved in the bullying plus significant others such as parents and carers.
- The Support Group Method. This is a non-punitive approach in which students, who have been identified as collectively bullying someone, are confronted at a group meeting with vivid evidence of the victim's distress derived from an interview previously conducted with the victim. Those present at the meeting may also include a number of students who have been selected because they are expected to be supportive of the victim. The victim is generally not present. It is impressed upon everyone that they have a responsibility to improve the situation. Each student is required to say what he or she will do to make matters better for the victim.

(The above descriptions are taken from the Professor Ken Rigby website at <http://www.kenrigby.net>)

Repairing Relationships

Whenever bullying or harassment occurs, relationships are negatively impacted upon. This can include the relationships between the students involved, parents, teachers, the class, year level and school. In order to repair the harm done to relationships due to conflict or inappropriate behaviour, the following actions may be taken:

- Counselling
- Mediation by trained mediators
- Parental involvement
- Implementation of a Behaviour Management Plan
- Request for written apology
- Official warning
- Suspension
- Negotiated transfer
- Expulsion
- Legal action and/or police involvement

Appendix 2: MPPS Code of Conduct and School Expectations

(As per laminated A3 sheets displayed in rooms)

Code of Conduct & School Expectations

Principles & Values behind our Code

- † All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect.
- Students have a right to work in a secure environment where they feel free to be able to develop to the full; their talents, interests and ambitions, without intimidation.
- Parents have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which expectations of care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others will be encouraged.
- Teachers have a right to expect that they will be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and co-operation.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.
- Principals and staff have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Code of Conduct.

School Expectations

Each Student is expected...

Right to Learn

- To arrive at school ready to learn
- To bring equipment to class
- To follow teachers' instructions
- To co-operate and participate in all classroom activities and excursions
- To complete all set work on time
- To allow other people to have their say

Co-operation and Courtesy

- To use good manners at all times
- To use appropriate language at all times
- To resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner
- To respect the views of others
- To be responsible for and accountable for their own behaviour
- To listen with consideration to the viewpoint
- To put up their hand in class discussions

Respect for Property

- To respect the property of the school and other members of the school community
- To place all litter in bins
- To clean up any mess they make
- To take part in yard duty and clean up as required

Safety in the Yard

- To remain in the school ground at all times
- To not leave school grounds to collect a ball or object outside the fence without permission
- To play in designated areas – front of school out of bounds (unless specified)
- To play safe games in the playground
- To not ride bicycles, skateboards, or scooters in the school ground
- Helmets must be worn
- Roller blades and skateboards are not permitted

No students are to bring any of these objects to school:

Banned Objects:

- Roller blades, knives, guns (including facsimiles), thongs, matches, lighters, 'white out', chewing gum, and bubble gum, alcohol, music players, laser lights, compound balls, mobile phones (if necessary, they are to be left at the general office)

Banned Games:

- British –bulldog, brandy
- Cricket, football & soccer to be played only on the oval (No compound balls for cricket)
- No ball games to be played to the West (toward prep area) of the red line

SunSmart:

- Each student is to wear legionnaires or brimmed hat from the beginning of September to the end of April.



Moonee Ponds Primary School
respect • optimism • care • collaboration

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3. Parents have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which expectations of care, courtesy and respect for the rights of all will be encouraged.
4. Teachers have a right to expect that they will be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and co-operation.
5. Parents have a responsibility to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.
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- To play in designated areas – front of school out of bounds (unless specified)
- To play safe games in the playground
- To not ride bicycles, skateboards, or scooters in the school ground
- Helmets must be worn when riding to and from school
- Roller blades are not permitted

No students are to bring any of these objects to school:

Banned Objects:

Roller blades, weapons, thongs, matches, lighters, chewing gum, and bubble gum, music players, laser lights, compound balls, mobile phones (if necessary, they are to be left at the general office at the beginning of the day and collected at the end of the day)

Banned Games:

British Bulldog, Brandy

Cricket, football & soccer to be played only on the oval (No compound balls for cricket)

All ball kicking games on the oval, except against the brick wall near the fire escape (recess and lunchtimes only).

Balls kicked against the wall must be below the white line.

What to do:

- Teacher to familiarise themselves with Student Code of Conduct and School Expectations (above)
- Junior class teachers conduct class discussion about what the rules are. The whole class commits to following the rules by all (whole class) drawing their face on it and writing their name in colour. Laminate and display in the class.
- Yr 3-6 students can commit to it by signing their signature! Laminate and display in the class.

Appendix 3: Consequences

If you choose to follow the agreed rules	If you choose not to follow the agreed rules
<p><u>Positive Feedback/recognition</u> A smile “Good on you” “Well done” Pat on the back <i>Explicit verbalising of what you approve</i></p> <p><u>Negotiated rewards</u> Free time Magazines Games Computers Music Activity days</p> <p><u>Privileges</u> Special seating Monitor Eat lunch early</p> <p><u>Rewards</u> Stickers Certificates Public/private acknowledgement Positive outcomes in your work and relationships with others</p> <p>You’ll learn more!</p>	<p><u>Consequences</u></p> <p>Get a warning</p> <p>Your choice of moving away</p> <p>Teacher directs where you will sit</p> <p>Removed from the classroom</p> <p>Withdrawal of privileges and rewards</p> <p>Lose time at recess and/or lunch</p> <p>Loss of time after school (detention)</p> <p>Miss out on specialist classes or sport</p> <p>Work to a contract</p> <p>Parents contacted</p> <p>Internal suspension</p> <p>External suspension</p> <p>Expulsion</p> <p>The consequences will always be linked to the behaviour:</p> <p>Logical Consequence</p>