



Moonee Ponds Primary School

respect • optimism • care • collaboration

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY (including Bullying Prevention)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Moonee Ponds Primary School on 9375 2511.

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.

Moonee Ponds 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.

It also applies to behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

CONTENTS

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

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
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 families coming from a range of cultural backgrounds. 11% of families having English as an additional language. The school also has representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and our inclusive and collaborative 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 are learning with Respect, Optimism, Care and Collaboration. These values 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 45% of year 3-6 students learning musical instruments.

We provide opportunities for students to develop their identity as leaders from foundation to year 6. Students have the opportunity to take on leadership roles including School Captains, Student Representative Council membership, Green Team Environmental Leaders, through the Foundation/Yr 5.6 Buddy Program, Year 5 Young Leaders program, House Captains and team captains 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. Wellbeing and Engagement Strategies

Moonee Ponds Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendship and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. 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.

We prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing.

We create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued. 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.

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, Italian and STEM. Our Library is used as a valuable resource as part of our classroom program. Technology plays an integral part in our curriculum with a high level of access across the school. Year 3 to 6 students have 1:1 devices through the eConnect program and in Foundation to Year 3 students use class laptops and iPads in their classrooms as a tool for learning.

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 focuses 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.

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 support 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.

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

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

Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and peer support groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, year level 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.

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.

We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:

- Respectful Relationships
- Bully Stoppers
- Safe Schools

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 programs such as Mindfulness, and the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program across Foundation to Year 6.

In addition to our classroom learning programs, we offer a range of enrichment programs to support the engagement of students and provide opportunities for cross-age connections, including:

- Student Representative Council
- Moonee Vale Instrumental Program (MVIMP)
- Lunchtime Clubs
- 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
- Whole school activities (i.e. Book Week, Harmony Day, Science Week, Italian Day, Visual Art Show, School Concert)

Measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Targeted

Year level groups are structured in professional learning communities (PLCs). Every teacher within the PLC structure monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their class. The team has a designated PLC leader who, with our Learning Specialist, monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and acts 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 Action Plan for Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety further information.

Our English as an Additional Language (EAL) students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school through our inclusive approach to teaching and learning.

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 are 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 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.

Students enrolled under the Department’s international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

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 Plan in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement 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

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 our school community has a right to experience a safe, supportive and 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.

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.

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.

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

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 Feedback (Concerns and Complaints) Policy available at: <https://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/school-policies/>

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 where they can fully develop their talents, interests and aspirations • learn in an environment free from bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation • 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 members of the school community. • demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn. • 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</p>

	<p>school community.</p> <p>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>
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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

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of values and Student Code of Conduct.

At Moonee Ponds Primary School, we learn with 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.

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.

The Problem-Solving Steps

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

- 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!

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.

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 policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. 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

Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

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.

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,	Remind student of appropriate rule. Ask them to return to task.

			interfering with others, not on 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 Student support group (SSG)	To set up and monitor a formal action plan to manage concerns about student behaviour.	When the student's behaviour intrudes beyond normal manageable limits.	Parents, Leadership staff and external support services to assist the teacher to develop a plan of action.
Suspension	Principal	Action plan has failed to modify seriously disruptive behaviour.	In line with DE guidelines.	In line with DE guidelines.
Expulsion	Principal	Student's behaviour has not changed. Student is deemed to be an unacceptable risk to others.	In line with DE guidelines.	In line with DE 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

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 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

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, including attendance and absence data
- Student Online Case-Management System (SOCS)

Moonee Ponds 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 in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- 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](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support Policy](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement (including Bullying Prevention) Policy:

- [Child Safety Standards](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Feedback \(Concerns and Complaints\) Policy](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)

APPENDIX

1. Bullying Prevention
2. School Expectations as displayed in classrooms
3. General outline of consequences

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Consultation	Education Policy Sub Committee Staff Parents/Carer Community
Approved by	Matthew Bott, Principal School Council
Approved on	27 November 2024
Next scheduled review date	2026 (every two years)

Appendix 1: Bullying Prevention

MPPS is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the MPPS community
- make clear that no form of bullying at MPPS will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at MPPS to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders, witnesses and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at MPPS.

When responding to bullying behaviour, MPPS aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

MPPS acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

Our approach to “Bullying Prevention” addresses how Moonee Ponds Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Moonee Ponds Primary School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Code of Conduct, Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Inclusion and Diversity policy.

Definitions

Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://BullyStoppers.education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour.

MPPS will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

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 has 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 do it”

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

Bullying Prevention

Moonee Ponds Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture and relationships to promote wellbeing. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Moonee Ponds Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effective way to prevent and address bullying.

At our school:

- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the [Schools Mental Health Menu](#) that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate. This includes eSmart Schools Framework including the Better Buddies program, Smiling Mind curriculum and the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum.
- We 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
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships initiative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equality across our school.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- We promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.
- We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- 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 Learning 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

Incident Response

Reporting concerns to Moonee Ponds Primary School

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff or another trusted adult as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Moonee Ponds Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

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 Upstanders

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) they 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 they should tell their parents or carers, so that their parents/carers may take the appropriate steps.

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

- 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.

Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in the student file; and
2. inform Assistant Principal or Principal.

The Assistant Principal or Principal (with the class teacher where appropriate) is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Assistant Principal or Principal may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parent/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

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>

Responses to bullying behaviours

When the school has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with Assistant Principal, Principal and Student Support Services staff (as appropriate).

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Moonee Ponds Primary School will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

The School may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral to i.e. the Student Wellbeing Team, Department of Education and Training Student Support Services, external provider to:
 - the target student or students
 - the students engaging in the bullying behaviour
 - affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).

- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, i.e. connect affected students with an older Student Mentor.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example Martial Arts Therapy (MAT) Program.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Moonee Ponds Primary School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Principal or Assistant Principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Further Information and Resources


Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

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	School Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> † 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. 	<p>Each Student is expected...</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Banned Games: British –bulldog, brandy Cricketer, 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</p> <p>SunSmart: Each student is to wear legionnaires or brimmed hat from the beginning of September to the end of April.</p>
 <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Moonee Ponds Primary School</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: small;">respect • optimism • care • collaboration</p> </div>	

PRINCIPLES and VALUES BEHIND OUR CODE

1. All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect.
2. Students have a right to work in a secure environment where they feel free to be able to develop to the full; their talents, interest and ambitions, without intimidation.
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.
6. 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 of others
- To put up their hand in class discussions

Respect for Property

- To respect their property, 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 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: Logical Consequence</p>