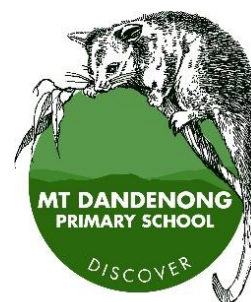


STUDENT WELFARE, WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Ratified: July 2017

Review: July 2020



1. Policy Statement

Mt Dandenong Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. 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 welfare, wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

Mt Dandenong Primary School has **zero tolerance to child abuse**. We support and respect all students. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe **environment** for children of any ability.

Mt Dandenong Primary School acknowledges that each teacher is a vital source of support and a determinant in the success of his or her students. The teachers at this school will work collectively to ensure that students feel valued and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the school and can effectively engage with their learning. This school recognises the need to be engaging and inclusive, recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students, accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning and intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs. Our school strives to be a learning community where students and teachers relate well to each other, and where different ideas and viewpoints are valued and respected.

Our heterogeneous profile means that in any given class a range of student ability exists. Within this diversity, our school aims to challenge all students to become optimistic, resilient, creative and critical thinkers. We seek to promote our school values of Respect, Independence, Community and Honesty throughout the curriculum, in co-curricular activities, and in our daily operations.

2. Guidelines

2.1 The school will focus on establishing positive and respectful relationships, particularly between teachers and students, and establishing a learning community that provides multiple and diverse opportunities for students to experience success

2.2 The school will collaboratively develop and implement a fair and respectful whole-school behaviour management approach, where staff are confident, skilled and proactive in the management of student welfare and behavioural issues

2.3 The school will encourage and provide multiple opportunities for parents/carers and members of the broader community to play an active part in the life of the school and the education of their children

2.4 The school's curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviour to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.

2.5 The school will promote active student participation and provide students with a sense of ownership of their environment

2.6 The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners

2.7 The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students. The school will monitor and evaluate progress and have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support

2.8 The school will encourage students to develop an understanding and awareness of their rights and responsibilities to others within the school community

2.9 The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students

3. Program

3.1 The curriculum programs of the school will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the school's students by:

- accommodating different learning profiles and rates of learning
- supporting the academic, physical, social and emotional needs of all students
- intervening early to identify and respond to individual student needs

3.2 The school is committed to the delivery of an inclusive curriculum that ensures all our students have access to a quality education to meet their diverse needs.

To improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities, the following key strategies are in place:

- providing parents/carers with a learning program that best suits their child's needs
- involving students and parents in programming and planning decisions
- supporting students access to programs that let them pursue achievable pathways
- ensuring the expertise of teachers working in our school is maintained and developed
- appointing a staff member yearly to oversee the Program for Students with Disabilities (Key Contact Person)

3.3 Our school will implement a whole-school behaviour management approach that is based on restorative practices, social values, social competencies and positive peer relationships.

The key focus will be on prevention and early intervention strategies that:

- define and teach school-wide and classroom expectations
- establish consistent school-wide and classroom practices for problem behaviour
- establish school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/ or behaviour difficulty
- provide school-wide and classroom processes for ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empower students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- provide a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

3.4 Parent and carer involvement in the school helps children achieve the best possible learning outcomes. Parent and carers will be provided with the opportunity to participate in school life, both formally and informally, through School Council, classroom assistance, volunteering, access to an online communication portal and being provided with the opportunity to say up to date with news about what is happening in education via various communication outlets from school

3.5 The school's strategies to promote pro-social values will be whole school in focus and include close links with curriculum. The Victorian Curriculum includes the personal and social capability domain which states that through the development of positive social relationships individuals become linked to society, develop a sense of belonging and learn to live and work with others. In that context the school curriculum will include pro-social values and behaviours to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement

3.6 Student voice/student participation is about valuing people and valuing the learning that results when we engage the capacities and multiple voices in the school. It focuses on realising the leadership potential inherent within all learners. There are five dimensions to student participation:

- student involvement in school and community development
- students as researchers and co-enquirers
- student feedback on teaching and learning
- students as peer-tutors
- student involvement as a manifestation of inclusion principles

The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change. Student participation ranges from young people sharing their opinions of problems and potential solutions through student council. It also includes our students sharing their 'voice' by collaborating with teachers to actually improve

education outcomes, including helping to improve teaching, curriculum and teacher-student relationships and leading to changes in student assessment.

3.7 The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. It provides an environment that welcomes all parents/carers and is responsive to them as partners in learning. The school will ensure that the unique experiences and skills of our students' families enrich the learning environment and the school community

The school will facilitate successful partnerships with parents/carers and families by:

- ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's Student Welfare, Wellbeing & Engagement Policy
- conducting effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications
- providing volunteer opportunities to enable parents/carers and students to contribute
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families as participants in school decision-making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students and the school
- providing opportunities to enhance parenting knowledge and skills

3.8 Implementing preventative and early intervention strategies to support positive behaviours is a key part of the Student Welfare, Wellbeing & Engagement Policy at our school. Prevention and early intervention strategies the school may deploy include:

- defining and teaching school-wide and classroom expectations
- establishing consistent school-wide and classroom consequences for problem behaviour
- establishing school-wide and classroom processes for early identification of students experiencing academic and/ or behaviour difficulty
- providing school-wide and classroom processes for the ongoing collection and use of data for decision-making
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing a physical environment conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- utilise evidence-based interventions, monitored regularly for those students who face difficulty with learning and/or behaviour

3.9 The school will promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and participation through:

- articulating high expectations to all members of the school community
- adopting consistent, rigorous procedures to monitor and record student absences
- following up student absences promptly and consistently
- implementing data-driven attendance improvement strategies
- creating safe, supportive learning environments where all students experience success through active participation and engagement in purposeful learning

- providing early identification of, and supportive intervention for, students at risk of non-attendance
- linking with local community groups and agencies to maximise program and individual support

3.10 The school will use coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. The school will provide the following support structures:

- monitoring of, and responding to, protracted student absences
- trauma management plan
- protocol for mandatory reporting
- Student Support Groups for children in need
- bullying survey of students and school environment

3.11 Longitudinal data will be collected regarding frequency and types of welfare issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.

Some sources of data are, but not limited to:

- the Attitudes to School Survey data
- School Level Report data
- Parent Survey data
- data from case management work with students
- Staff Survey data
- Student Wellbeing survey data

3.12 The school will utilise relevant external student welfare and wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- psychologist for psychological and academic assessment
- mentors – providing support for ‘at risk’ children
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- youth agencies
- local parent support groups
- relevant DET support staff
- School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)

4. Rights and Responsibilities

Rights and Responsibilities

“Engaging schools are effective schools.” (*Rights and Responsibilities, p 14, 2.2.3*)

Statement of Rights

Mount Dandenong Primary School, aware of our legal obligations and responsibilities as outlined in legislation, has compiled the following statements of rights. (*Equal Opportunity*)

Act 1995, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the Education and Training Reform Act 2006).

4.1 Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity

4.2 Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* sets out the types of discrimination that is unlawful. It aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments, sexual orientation or age.

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
STUDENTS	
<p>Every student at Mt Dandenong Primary School has the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the opportunity to learn in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment. • Feel safe and be free from any form of bullying, i.e. both within the school grounds and online. • Be treated with respect and dignity. • Learn, free from disruptions. • Expect positive and respectful relationships. 	<p>Students at Mt Dandenong Primary School have the responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow school values and adopt appropriate behaviours. • To wear the correct school uniform at school and on excursions. • To report bullying and avoid participating in behaviour that includes physical or verbal harm. • Demonstrate good manners and respect for all. • Respond respectfully to requests from teachers and others in the school community
STAFF	
<p>Every staff member at Mt Dandenong Primary School has the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment. • Feel safe and be free from any form of bullying. • Be treated with respect and dignity. • Attend/be part of ongoing Professional Development. • Work with parents of students with additional needs to ensure needs are being met. 	<p>Staff at Mt Dandenong Primary School have the responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a safe, stimulating learning environment and provide programs consistent with DET guidelines. • Provide an environment conducive to learning • Report bullying to the Principal. • Recognise the rights and needs of students and staff • Assess their own performance and to participate in professional development.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be caring and be well prepared to solve/ resolve problems that may occur in the school setting. • Provide a positive role model
PARENTS/CARE-GIVERS	
<p>Every Parent and Guardian at Mt Dandenong Primary School has the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be involved in a learning partnership with teachers and students. • Know that their child’s learning environment is safe and happy. • Be informed of school activities and be involved in school community decision making. • Have access to school documents pertaining to the direction of school. 	<p>Parents and Guardians at Mt Dandenong Primary School have the responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that their child attends school daily and is punctual on a daily basis. • Engage in a partnership with teachers and students. • Take basic care of their children. • Support and encourage their children’s responsible, safe and courteous behaviour. • Attend advertised meetings to keep informed. • Support the schools dress code and ensure children wear the correct attire.

5. Shared Expectations

At Mt Dandenong Primary School the expectations of procedures, intervention, positive behaviours and actions and consequences are jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students, teachers and parents/guardians. To work effectively, Mt Dandenong Primary School has high expectations for the whole school community as follows:

Students:

- Are encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their learning.
- Set goals and manage resources to achieve these goals.
- With support, are expected to participate fully in the school’s educational program, including attending school regularly.
- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves and the whole school community.
- Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn.
- Will speak to students in a positive manner regardless of personal feeling or behaviour.

Teachers/School Staff:

- Will adhere to the school values, modelling a positive learning environment.
- Apply inclusive teaching practices, which are relevant, challenging and appropriate, allowing each child to experience success in their learning.
- Make accessible educational provision for all students, including appropriate student services.
- Create positive and supportive partnerships with students, parents/guardians and the wider community.
- Mt Dandenong Primary School recognises there are actions that need to be taken to ensure gender-based discrimination and the prevalence of violence against women does not impact on the opportunities and outcomes of students.
- Mt Dandenong Primary School recognises that experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault can have a significant impact on the wellbeing and engagement of students.
- Staff will work with students who experience domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault, their parents/carers (where appropriate) and involved teaching staff to agree on 'reasonable adjustments' to the student's workload, assessment and attendance requirements to ensure as little interruption to their education as possible.
- Staff will maintain a safe and welcoming environment for gender diverse students to ensure no interruption to their education.
- Staff will work with gender diverse students, their parents/carers (where appropriate) and involved teaching staff to ensure that school facilities, practices and culture do not deter the student's continued engagement in education.
- Follow the Teaching Profession Code of Conduct : <http://www.vit.vic.gov.au>

Parents/Guardians

- Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress.
- Will work co-operatively with the school, including regular and constructive communication with the school regarding their child's learning and wellbeing.
- Actively support their child's engagement in the school environment.
- Support the school through maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.
- Ensure regular attendance, model positive behaviours and assist their child with their school work

6. School Actions and Consequences

Mt Dandenong Primary School will ensure that the consequences for students whose behaviour and/or attendance are of concern will be clearly outlined. Attendance Guidelines include an Attendance Meeting followed by a Student Attendance or Behaviour Improvement Plan, a Return to School Plan for extended absences/holidays. Suspension and Expulsion Procedures are as per DET Student Engagement & Policy Guidelines (Appendices 12-19).

7. Related Links and Policies

DET Policy Advice – Student Engagement

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

DET Advice – Child Health and Wellbeing

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/health/Pages/default.aspx#mainContent>

MDPS Policy – Bullying and Harassment Policy

MDPS Policy – Behaviour Management Policy

MDPS Policy – Attendance Policy