

MOOROOLBARK GRAMMAR

Student Engagement and Pastoral Care Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

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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.

Mooroolbark Grammar is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked. The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

Mooroolbark Grammar recognises the importance of friendships and peer support in helping children and young people feel safe and be less isolated. We actively support students to develop and sustain friendships through documented formal programs and co-curricula activities.

DEFINITIONS

Pastoral care is the support given to students for their development as a person. It relates to the total care of students and involves tending to both the academic and non-academic needs of students including spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing.

SCOPE

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

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CHILD SAFETY

Mooroolbark Grammar is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families. We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students. The school adheres to the [Ministerial Order 1359](#) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments and will ensure that student engagement and pastoral care strategies are developed inclusively to meet the needs of all students.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Mooroolbark Grammar is committed to ensuring that information and procedures to enable and to respond to concerns raised by students are age-appropriate, simple, and accessible for all students including students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disability, LGBTIQ+ students and other vulnerable students. The school delivers age-appropriate education to all students about:

- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
- resilience and coping with adversity
- child abuse awareness and their right to be safe
- their right to make decisions about their body and their privacy
- how they can raise concerns about safety, abuse or other harm
- any concerns raised will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately

Information about these topics, as well as other child safety and wellbeing topics, is made available to all students through various age-appropriate pastoral care initiatives as well as communications such as newsletters and the school's website and communication portal. Child safety and wellbeing topics are also incorporated into the school's curriculum.

1. School profile

Mooroolbark Grammar is situated on 6 acres at Mooroolbark, approximately 45 minutes from the Melbourne CBD. Landscaped gardens and recreational spaces surround the school building. The school's sporting facilities include a multi-purpose court for tennis, netball, basketball, and soccer.

The Mooroolbark Grammar learning program is tailored to each educational stage and builds resilient and independent learners with a strong work ethic and critical skills in decision-making, leadership, and enterprise. We believe in providing opportunities for our students to learn, grow and discover what they love and what they are good at. Mooroolbark Grammar also offers specialist classes in Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Physical Education, and Language other than English (LOTE) Spanish.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our Philosophy:

That all children are unique and must have a stimulating educational environment where they can grow mentally, emotionally and socially. That school would be a caring and safe place where students can meet their full potential. That children and young people are entitled to additional rights laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognise that young people have special needs to help them survive and develop their full potential. All children have the right to special protection because of their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#)

Our Vision:

Raising the cultural, aesthetic, physical, social and survival levels of the students to enable them to flourish and prosper as effective members of society.

Our Mission:

To develop responsible and engaged learners through the utilisation of our distinct learning tools (known as “Study Technology”). To provide a curriculum that is rich and relevant and allows all students to succeed. To foster tolerance, respect and acceptance of others and to build each students’ resilience and self-esteem.

3. Engagement strategies

Encouraging Expected Behaviours

Teaching expected positive behaviours is necessary, but not sufficient for success in learning. Schools must also provide incentives to encourage students to use pro-social skills. The critical element of an incentive system is not the token or tangible, but the social acknowledgement and interaction between the student and the school. Mooroolbark Grammar has developed and implemented school wide strategies for staff to use when students exhibit the expected positive behaviours related to the school expectations.

Positive Reinforcement

The implementation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and pastoral care programs across the school supports the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment. Energy is directed into a systematic approach to reinforce positive behaviours. Our learning environment is characterised by high expectations for student learning of which the school community is fully aware of through the establishment of open communication.

We welcome parent engagement through greater involvement in classroom curriculum support, excursions and parent learning programs through the establishment of the SEL program that manage incidents via increasingly clear and well-understood processes. This in turn promotes better community engagement. We endeavor to maintain strong relationships with all relevant support agencies.

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Programs and Strategies to promote student engagement:

- building positive relationships through working with one to one/small groups as needed
- enrichment and engagement programs (Co-curricula programs)
- social skills groups
- academic Intervention – literacy and numeracy based intervention (as needed)
- school based and external providers for counseling
- Student leadership groups

4. Identifying students in need of support

Mooroolbark Grammar is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Wellbeing staff play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Mooroolbark Grammar 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
- referrals from staff

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. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. School wide communication strategies of the **school values and expectations** are developed and implemented. This is to ensure that all members of our school community are aware of the expected behaviours and encourages parents to use the same strategies at home.

Some examples include:

- a. All school values and expectations are posted in every classroom area
- b. All school values and expectations will be posted in the playgrounds on the community billboards
- c. All school values and expectations can be accessed at home via the school communication portal
- d. Class time dedicated to the explicit teaching of the range of expected behaviours linked to data specific to the whole school, each learning area and/or each classroom.
- e. Modelling/role play by older students, staff, parents – presented at assembly, older students visiting younger students' classes, etc.

Enrolment

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All students who meet the enrolment eligibility criteria have the right to enrol at Mooroolbark Grammar.

Participation

Mooroolbark Grammar respects the rights of each student to participate in all aspects of school life. Participation is only restricted if and when a student's behaviour infringes on the rights of others and/or places a student at risk. Withdrawal from programs and or the provision of a limited timetable will be negotiated with students' parents/carers as part of a staged response to managing behaviour and/or wellbeing.

Harassment and Victimisation

All members of the school community have a right to feel safe, be treated with respect and given every opportunity to play and work without interference. All members of the Mooroolbark Grammar community are expected to respect individuality, diversity, differences of opinion, rules and rights of others.

Curriculum Development

All students have the right to access curriculum which addresses their academic, physical and social needs. The school is responsible for curriculum delivery and design. Curriculum documents are available to staff and parents/carers. Where applicable Mooroolbark Grammar will provide a variety of programs and interventions that will address the specific needs of students in relation to gender, special learning needs, disabilities and impairments, giftedness and students from language backgrounds other than English. This might include:

- a. An Individual Learning Plan for each student at risk academically outlining in detail the students' learning goals.
- b. A Student Absence Learning Plan for when a child has an extended absence from school.
- c. A Behaviour Action Plan to develop strategies for students experiencing behavioural difficulties.

6. Student behavioural expectations

Mooroolbark Grammar Staff are expected to:

- teach and role model the school values
- adopt inclusive teaching practices
- use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning
- create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments
- acknowledge the diversity of students, which is central to creating a positive and inclusive school culture
- fairly, reasonably, consistently and positively implement the *Engagement and Wellbeing Policy*

Mooroolbark Grammar Parents/Carers are expected to:

- promote positive educational outcomes for their child by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress
- support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students

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- support their child by maintaining regular attendance, modeling positive behaviours and assisting their child with their schoolwork
- cooperate with the school, which includes participating in regular communication with school staff regarding their child's learning and wellbeing
- actively support their child's engagement in the school environment

Mooroolbark Grammar students are expected to:

- Display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community
- Attend regularly and participate fully in the school's educational program. Mooroolbark Grammar recognises that some students need support to achieve this and will work with those students whose attendance could be improved.
- Take responsibility for and reflect upon their own learning; students will be actively encouraged by teachers to manage their own learning and growth
- Learn positive behaviours which contribute to the educational, social, emotional and physical development of themselves and those around them – students will be supported to achieve this goal.

Shared Expectations: Teachers

Classroom Management

- follow the school's expected behaviours and consequences
- support students to be familiar with the school expectations and consequences
- support students to make the link between the school values and behaviour expectations
- revisit the behavior expectations on a regular basis throughout the year
- establish rapport with and welcome the involvement of parents

Engage in quality teaching and learning

- ensure learning experiences are relevant and meaningful
- ensure that there is an appropriate level of challenge for each student
- match learning experiences and assessment techniques with student interests and learning styles
- encourage cooperative learning

Provide opportunities for students to make decisions about their own learning

- clearly communicate fair and reasonable expectations
- encourage students to set goals and persist in problem solving situations
- assist students to develop time management and study skills
- develop supportive interpersonal relationships
- Validate students exhibiting positive behaviour
- communicate a genuine interest in and care for the students
- develop a sense of responsibility for students' own progress and personal behaviour goals

Establish ways to develop self-esteem

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- Plan for success by breaking tasks into manageable steps which ensure individual success
- acknowledge success
- minimise criticism and accept mistakes as part of the learning process
- communicate regularly with all students
- create a sense of belonging to the classroom group
- give students responsibility

Policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families at Mooroolbark Grammar are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy and addressed through the following policies:

- Child Safe Policy
- Child Safety Reporting and Responding Obligations Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mooroolbark Grammar will institute a staged response. Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at Mooroolbark Grammar will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to principal and/or deputy principal
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Student Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Victorian Government regulations.

Physical restraint and seclusion are only permitted within our school in exceptional circumstances where it is immediately required and reasonably necessary to protect the safety of a student or another person. Physical restraint and seclusion are not permitted at any other time.

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No person – including a parent/carer, clinician, practitioner, or student – can authorise, consent to, or approve the use of physical restraint or seclusion in our school.

Every instance of physical restraint and seclusion must be reported as an incident to the school governing Board who will undertake specified actions according to the severity rating of the incident.

Suspensions and Expulsions

Suspension and expulsion are serious disciplinary measures, and the principal must consider alternative interventions and supports for students before proceeding to suspension or expulsion as the appropriate action. Only the principal in consultation with the governing Board has authority to make the decision to suspend a student. This authority cannot be delegated.

In line with [Ministerial Order 1125](#), no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled. The Principal of Mooroolbark Grammar is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded.

Mooroolbark Grammar has clearly stated expectations of appropriate behaviours. All members of the school community share responsibility to support the appropriate behaviour expectations outlined in the school agreements. In cases where students do not meet the expectations, every effort is made to provide consequences in a consistent, fair and transparent manner to achieve positive outcomes for the student.

Students will only be excluded from school when all other measures deemed appropriate have been exhausted or been implemented without success or where immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action given the student's behaviour. Suspension or expulsion measures are the responsibility of the school governing Board, the principal and/or deputy principal.

The school will consider the educational and emotional impacts on the student and take into account situations where a student is in out-of-home care, a Koori student, and/or a student with a disability, when taking suspension or expulsion measures. If a student is suspended it should be for the shortest time necessary. The period of suspension should be used by the school, the student and the student's parents/carers as an opportunity to reflect on the present difficulties and develop positive, student-focused re-engagement strategies.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Mooroolbark Grammar 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 relevant 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

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- 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 (as needed).

Mooroolbark Grammar has a strong commitment in establishing positive partnerships with external agencies to support the educational and emotional development of all students. We are diligent in gaining support for all children who are displaying at risk behaviours.

8. Evaluation

Mooroolbark Grammar 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. Mooroolbark Grammar will regularly monitor available data to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey data
- case management data
- attendance and absence data

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website and through the school's communication portal
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Information for parents and students on supervision before and after school is available on our school website .

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related School Policies/Documents:

- Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy and Statement of Commitment
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Duty of Care Policy

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- Statement of Values and School Philosophy (on Website)

Victorian Government guidance relevant to this policy:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and will also be updated if significant changes are made to school programs that require a revision of the school's pastoral care arrangements.

Policy last reviewed	July 2022
Approved by	Principal / School Governing Board
Consultation (Recommended)	Noted at Governing Board meeting July 2022
Next scheduled review date	July 2024