

# Mt Egerton Primary School

*Living and Learning Together Since 1856*



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**Principal:** Janet Tuaine

**Phone:** 03 5368 9357

## Upcoming Dates

### Principal's Message:

It has been another fantastic fortnight at Mount Egerton Primary School, with students continuing to demonstrate our school values of Kindness, Perseverance, Resilience and Community in all aspects of school life.

As we move into winter, we are certainly experiencing the cold and wet weather that comes with it. On particularly wet mornings & afternoons, families are welcome to drive into the school grounds for drop-off & pick-up their child/ren, to help keep students safe and dry. We also ask that all students come to school with a warm coat or jacket each day so they can remain comfortable during outdoor activities and break times.

Next week, our Grade 5 students will be participating in their exciting Sovereign Hill visit on 9th and 10th June (the day after the public holiday). This is always a wonderful learning experience that brings history to life, and we know our students will gain a great deal from the opportunity.

Looking ahead, a reminder that our Swimming Program will commence in the last week of term, beginning Monday 22nd June. Further information has been provided to families on Compass.

I would also like to remind families that our next School Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June. School Council plays an important role in supporting the ongoing success of our school, and we appreciate the commitment of our council members.

Thank you to our students, staff and families for your continued support. As always, it is wonderful to see our school community working together to create a positive and caring learning environment for all.

Please refer to Mount Egerton Primary School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy attached to this newsletter.

A reminder that all of our school policies can be found on our school's website <https://www.mtegertonps.vic.edu.au/>

### Junior School Council Milkshake Mondays

**Chocolate & Strawberry \$2**

#### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June**

King's Birthday holiday – no school

#### **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

Grade 5 Sovereign Hill costume visit

#### **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

School Council Meeting  
MARC

#### **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

Swimming Program begins  
Milkshake Monday

#### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June**

Last Day of term – 2:15 pm finish

#### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July**

Curriculum Day – No Students

#### **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July**

Term 3 Begins – Students return  
MARC

# Mt Egerton Primary School

*Living and Learning Together Since 1856*



## Newsletter

### Student Awards

- ❖ Congratulations to Ben for demonstrating our school value of Community. Ben welcomed and helped new students navigate our school on Open Day. Well done & thank you Ben!
- ❖ Congratulations to Max for demonstrating our school value of Resilience. Max demonstrated bravery and participated fully in the Kinder visit performance.

### Reading Awards

- ❖ Congratulations to Maisie and Angus for reading 75 nights!
- ❖ Congratulations to Justin for reading 125 nights!

### Principal Award

- ❖ Congratulations to Abby. Abby is consistently a positive role model in our school.

### Aussie of the Month – May

- ❖ Congratulations to Lily for receiving Aussie of the Month for May. Lily consistently demonstrates the values of mateship and respect. Lily demonstrates an outstanding display of these values and fairness towards her peers. Well done Lily!



### Junior Class Assembly Performance – “Raine the Rain Moth”





Mount Egerton  
Primary School

# Art Tech! Showcase!



Thursday 18th June 2026

4:00pm to 6:00pm



*Celebrating creativity  
and innovation!*

Showcasing student learning  
and artworks from across the

-  Arts
-  Technologies
-  Bush Classroom
-  Chinese

curriculum.



**GOLD COIN  
ENTRY**

Your support helps  
fund our creative  
learning programs.



**LUCKY DOOR  
PRIZE**

Be in it to win a  
fantastic prize on  
the night!



**LIGHT SNACKS  
WITH TEA & COFFEE**

Enjoy light snacks  
and a cuppa while  
you explore.



**PEOPLE'S CHOICE  
AWARD**

Vote for your  
favourite artworks  
until **5:45pm.**



**AWARDS  
AT 6:00PM**


Join us as we  
announce the  
award winners!




Mount Egerton  
**MECHANICS HALL**

See the talents of our students in a celebration  
of creativity, innovation and culture!

*All are  
welcome!*

 Mount Egerton  
Mechanics Hall

 For more information  
Phone: 5368 9357

 Mount Egerton  
Primary School



# Mount Egerton Early Explorers Program MEEEP

Our Early Explorers Program, MEEEP, is a specially curated Pre-Prep learning program for children who are considering attending Mount Egerton Primary School for their Foundation year. The program is designed to ensure a smooth & connected transition experience for your child. Our Mount Egerton Early Explorers Program runs from term one to term four, offering several morning sessions.

Facilitated by our experienced Junior Room teacher, MEEEP will enable your child to:

- Become confident with Foundation routines & school.
- Meet staff & form friendships with other Junior room peers.
- Participate in engaging early literacy & numeracy activities. As well as enjoy indoor & outdoor learning opportunities.

Please contact Principal Janet Tuaine to arrange your child's participation in MEEEP for 2026!



## Our Service:

- ✓ Engaging Pre-Prep Program
- ✓ Stimulating School Environment
- ✓ Qualified & Nurturing Teachers
- ✓ Creative, Fun & Hands-On
- ✓ Indoor and Outdoor Learning

Raising Children Australia is your complete and trusted online parenting resource.

At raisingchildren.net.au, we provide free, reliable, up-to-date and independent information to help your family grow and thrive together. We're funded by the Australian Government, reviewed by experts and non-commercial, so you know you can trust us.

Designed for busy families and full of tips and tricks for you to try, our content is easy to find and easy to digest. We have the answers to hundreds of parenting questions, where and when you need them.

Our articles, videos and interactive resources are tailored to different ages and stages, taking you from nurturing a newborn to raising a confident, resilient teen - and helping you to look after yourself as a parent too.

[raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au) is here for you, every step of your parenting journey.

## Mental Health Services and Support

### Beyond Blue

24/7 mental health support service

**1300 22 4636**  
beyondblue.org.au

### headspace

Online support and counselling to young people aged 12 to 25

**1800 650 890**  
(9am to 1am daily)  
headspace.org.au

### Kids Helpline

24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services for children and young people aged 5 to 25

**1800 55 1800**  
kidshelpline.com.au

### Lifeline

24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services

**13 11 14**  
lifeline.org.au

### Suicide Call Back

24/7 crisis support and counselling service for people affected by suicide

**1300 659 467**  
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

### 13YARN

24/7 crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

**13 92 76**  
13yarn.org.au

### Mensline

24/7 counselling service for men

**1300 78 99 78**  
mensline.org.au

### 1800 RESPECT

24/7 support for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence and abuse

**1800 737 732**  
1800respect.org.au

### QLife

LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral

**1800 184 527**  
qlife.org.au

If you are concerned about someone at risk of immediate harm, call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

# Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the principal.

## Purpose

The Mount Egerton Primary School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

## Scope

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

## Definitions

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](#):

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer.

## Statement of commitment to child safety

Mount Egerton Primary School 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.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

## Roles and responsibilities

School leadership team

Our principal is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

### **School staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#), including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

School council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety, via the Child Safe Standards School Council Training slide presentation available on [PROTECT](#).
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. “At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy”).

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

All staff are deemed ‘child safety champions’ and support the principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of the child safety champion are outlined at [Guidance for child safety champions](#).

Our principal and child safety champions are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The principal is responsible for monitoring the school’s compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach the principal if they have any concerns about the school’s compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- The principal is responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

Our monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

## Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#) also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

## Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

Students will fill in an ICT agreement annually to ensure they are aware of the behaviours needed in an online environment.

## Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Mount Egerton Primary School, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- Staff are aware of the Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan
- Actively support participation and inclusion in the school through ILPs, parent meetings and encouraging families to be part of their child's learning journey
- Our school has measures in place to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated (see our inclusion and diversity policy)

## Student empowerment

To support child safety and wellbeing at Mount Egerton Primary School, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging through implementing our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships, our student Code of Conduct, our school values.

We inform students of their rights through our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at through our [Concerns and Complaints policy](#) or talking to the principal.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Staff will maintain current skills and knowledge regarding reporting obligations through annual elearning modules. Staff work with the regional Respectful relationships team to provide further professional development opportunities to support their skills in this area.

## Family engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Mount Egerton Primary School we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this:

- through communication via our newsletter, on our school website, school council, student, staff, and parent meetings.

- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents via our website and at the office.
- Newsletters will inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed in the school foyer.

## Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Our [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#) provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

School staff are made aware of the diverse circumstances of our students in order to provide appropriate support to them.

## Suitable staff and volunteers

At Mount Egerton Primary School, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

### Staff recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

- [Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [School Council Employment](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management.](#)

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
  - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
  - the person's history of working with children
  - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.
  - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

### Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program.

The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct

- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

### Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done by via regular classroom observations and staff professional statements of expectations.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

### Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our [Volunteers Policy](#), which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

### Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

The training will allow staff to adequately assess child safety and wellbeing risks, as outlined on our risk register.

### School council training and education

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- Mount Egerton Primary School child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

## Complaints and reporting processes

Mount Egerton Primary School fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Concerns and Complaints Policy. The Concerns and Complaints Policy can be found at our [website](#).

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers

(including school council employees) must follow our [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#). Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#) and [Bullying Prevention Policy](#) cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

## Communications

Mount Egerton Primary School is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT posters around the school
- updates in our school newsletter
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

## Privacy and information sharing

Mount Egerton Primary School collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

## Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policy: [Records Management – School Records](#)

## Review of child safety practices

At Mount Egerton Primary School, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

## Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy

## Related Department of Education and Training policies

- [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](#)
- [Family Violence Support](#)
- [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Supervision of Students Policy](#)
- [Visitors in Schools Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools Policy](#)
- [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

## Other related documents

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)

## Policy status and review

School Council is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the community.

## Approval

<b>Created date</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2022</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	School Council – June 2026
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Principal
<b>Endorsed on</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> June, 2022
<b>Next review date</b>	June, 2028

# BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the principal

## PURPOSE

Mount Egerton Primary School 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 Mount Egerton Primary School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Mount Egerton Primary School will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Mount Egerton Primary School 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 Mount Egerton Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Mount Egerton Primary School 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.

Mount Egerton Primary School 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.

## SCOPE

This policy addresses how Mount Egerton Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Mount Egerton 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 Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

## 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 and this Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

*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. Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy 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.

## Bullying Prevention

Mount Egerton 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 Mount Egerton 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.
- 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.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy

## Incident Response

# Reporting concerns to Mount Egerton 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 Mount Egerton Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including ES staff and the principal.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Mount Egerton Primary School should contact the Principal on 5369 9357.

## Investigations

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

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass
2. inform relevant staff involved such as principal/teaching staff

The staff are responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, staff 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 with the between Principal and staff 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](#).

## Responses to bullying behaviours

When the staff have 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 the principal, SSS, Department of Education and Training specialist staff and/or Senior Education Improvement Leader.

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, Mount Egerton 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.

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

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral SSS 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 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, including Respectful Relationships and Kids Matter.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- 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.

Mount Egerton 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.

Staff are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school office upon request

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy

- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Our school also 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](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support Policy](#)

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](#)
- [Schools Mental Health Menu](#)

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student surveys
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with Mount Egerton Primary School, School Council

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2024
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2026