



## STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Principal.

### 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.

Mount Egerton Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

### SCOPE

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

### CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

# Mount Egerton Primary School



## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Mount Egerton is a growing, rural, community approximately 30 kilometres south-east of Ballarat. The school has a long and proud history since it first opened in 1856. The current school was built on an elevated 2 hectare site in 1882 and is still in use today. It includes 2 classrooms, a teacher resource room, a modern flexible learning space which includes a library, and a teaching kitchen and an office/administration area.

Also on-site is a multi-purpose shed, which is used for art/craft and indoor sports activities plus two playgrounds, a bush classroom, sports oval and modern basketball court. The site includes many large trees and native bush, fruit trees and vegetable garden facilities. The school boasts 180-degree panoramic views looking over nearby townships and native wildlife.

Council projection suggest the population is due to increase over the coming years and we are optimistic the school will begin to grow again.

Mount Egerton itself is a growing community with many young families settling in. The current enrolment for 2022 is 16 students - across Years Foundation - 6.

The school is organized into two classes for Reading, Writing and Maths and one class for all other subjects with both a teacher and Education Support Officer working in the room. This enables a fantastic student:teacher ratio in all subjects. The organisation of the classrooms is generally influenced by school numbers.

The staffing profile includes the Principal, 1 Classroom teacher, Education Support Officer and a business manager. We also have access to an Auslan teacher through Auslan Education services to deliver our Language program and a library/art Specialist Teacher through the MarcVan. OSHClub run an afterschool care service onsite each afternoon from dismissal until 6:00pm.

The staff at Mount Egerton Primary School strive to foster a number of core values and ultimately the attainment of the school purpose while catering for individual growth in a nurturing environment. The school attempts to provide students with a stimulating learning environment, where all individuals are treated with respect and where all staff provides challenging and enjoyable learning experiences that will promote individual student's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy skills. In the school there is a clear expectation that parents and teachers, along with other community members, are seen as partners in promoting student learning and that together they establish a highly positive, non-threatening school atmosphere, with the focus on strong communication and connectedness. Through the development of these ideals and partnerships the school hopes to establish a thriving 'Learning Community' within the community of Mount Egerton.

## Whole School Values

**Kindness:** *Being friendly, generous and considerate...*

**Wisdom:** *Having experience, knowledge and good judgment...*

### 2. School values, philosophy and vision

**Our vision:** Mount Egerton Primary School sees its core purpose as providing a friendly and caring learning environment that encourages students to work towards achieving their personal best in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation while becoming valued members of the community.

**Integrity:** *Being honest, respectful and having strong moral principles...*

**Courage:** *The ability to face challenges; bravery...*



## Our values:

Kindness: being friendly, generous and considerate.

Wisdom: having experience, knowledge and good judgement.

Integrity: being honest and having strong moral principles.

courage: the ability to accept challenges; showing bravery.

## 3. Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

Mount Egerton Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

### Universal

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing*
- *creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued*
- *welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning*
- *analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data*
- *teachers at Mount Egerton Primary School use a consistent instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
- *teachers at Mount Egerton Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching*
- *our school's Statement of Values and school philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community*
- *carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school and individual level*
- *students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including school*



based surveys. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Open Parachute
  - eSmart
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific learning needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. lunchtime activities)
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

## Targeted

- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Students with English as a second language are supported through an EAL program, and all culture and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ student support
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual learning plans
- staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

## Individual

Mount Egerton Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- awarding students with leadership roles (JSC, school captain, sports captain)
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan



- *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up*
- *referring the student to:*
  - *school-based wellbeing supports*
  - *Student Support Services*
  - *Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst*

*Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:*

- *being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing*
- *collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student*
- *monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family*
- *engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
  - *with a disability*
  - *in Out of Home Care*
  - *with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

#### 4. Identifying students in need of support

*Mount Egerton Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The staff play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Mount Egerton Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:*

- *personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled*
- *attendance records*
- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
- *attendance, detention and suspension data*
- *engagement with families*

#### 5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

# Mount Egerton Primary School



Rights	Responsibilities
<b>Students</b>	
To be treated fairly and courteously	To participate in their educational program
To participate fully in their education	To display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
To feel secure, safe and happy at school	Respect the right of others to learn
To learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation	To report any bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation

## Staff

To be treated with respect by students, parents and peers	To treat students in a way that develops self esteem To communicate positively with staff, students and parents
To expect students to follow the Engagement Policy Guidelines	To follow Engagement Policy Guidelines To use logical consequences and restorative practices To provide a Duty of Care to all students To keep records (preferably in a dated diary) of significant disciplinary actions
To expect students to learn	To assist students to learn To provide an inclusive and differentiated curriculum To ensure all students achieve success To communicate student progress to parents

## Parents

To expect that their child will be educated in a safe and secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged	Ensure students attend school and have the appropriate learning materials and attitude
To be contacted when their child continually disregards the School Engagement Policy or is involved in a major incident	Promote and support respectful relationships



Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted staff member. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

## 6. Behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with Mount Egerton Primary School's Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mount Egerton Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. 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 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 our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

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
- restorative practices
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.



# Mount Egerton Primary School



The Principal of Mount Egerton Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

## 7. Engaging with families

Mount Egerton Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with reading/homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making through the use of surveys and School Council
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, parent teacher meetings and developing individual plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

Mount Egerton Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

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

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Mount Egerton Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible. We will also develop and give student surveys throughout the year in order to act upon feedback and make improvements.



# Mount Egerton Primary School



## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

You can find the following policies on our website:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Bullying Prevention*
- *Child Safe Standards*

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February, 2024
Consultation	School Council February 20 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2026