



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Murchison Primary School.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour

Murchison 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

- School profile
- School values, philosophy and vision
- Wellbeing and engagement strategies
- Identifying students in need of support
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Student behavioural expectations and support
- Engaging with families
- Evaluation

POLICY

School profile

Murchison Primary School (established 1860) serves the rural town of Murchison and surrounding farming areas. Murchison is a historic town situated on the bank of the Goulburn River 36 km south of Shepparton. Our student body reflects the diversity of the community, in which links are forged through school-based programs. The school enrolment of 81, includes a strong representation from the Koorie population (14%) as of February 2022. Classes are organised into four home groups. The school consists of a brick building built in 1906; housing a community meeting space, professional's room, a library and music room, Murchison After School Kid's (MASK) room and resource room. The BER building includes four open plan classrooms, staff room, offices and staff resource room. Art lessons are held in the community upgraded shelter shed. Outdoor spaces include a covered outdoor learning area in the courtyard, a multi-purpose court, oval and the large, covered playground provides an all-weather venue for all students.

The school values providing an inclusive, caring environment where children are encouraged to be the best they can be by being safe, responsible, respectful learners within the community. Our focus is on the development of each child, socially, emotionally and academically. Classroom teachers provide a balanced integrated program based on the Victorian Curriculum, with AUSLAN being our Language Other Than English (LOTE). Our specialist programs are Art and Music. Senior students have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and perform in the Murchison Band. Student agency is encouraged through participation in the Junior School Council and the Student Leadership Team.

School values, philosophy and vision

Murchison Primary School's vision: As an inclusive school, we provide excellent education for students from Murchison and the surrounding community.

Murchison Primary School's mission is to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education.

Murchison Primary School's objective is to ensure all students leave our school with a practical understanding of the curriculum.

Murchison Primary School's values:

We pride our self on being an inclusive school. Our values are that we strive to be the best we can be by being safe, responsible, respectful, learners within our community. We have high expectations of ourselves, and others as demonstrated in our school expectations. We persist with our learning and care for ourselves and our school. We value diversity and our school motto of 'Be the Best You Can Be' underpins the core values of the school. Staff and students work together to develop emotional intelligences so that students understand how to have self-control, self-awareness, be motivated, manage relationships, develop empathy and skills of being friendly, safe and strong. We strongly value the development of social/emotional skills and academic achievement.

Our Statement of Values is available our <https://www.murchps.vic.edu.au/>

Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Murchison 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
- deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students are able to have choice that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at Murchison Primary School use our instructional model 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 Murchison 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 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, cohort and individual level
- all students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Leadership team and Junior School Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through sporting events, music program, multi age activity days, buddy and peer support opportunities
- all students are welcome to self-refer to staff or the Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an ‘open door’ policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour
- opportunities for student inclusion including Buddy programs and lunch time 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
- English as a second language students will be supported through an EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students will be supported to feel safe and included in our school
- we will support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background
- we will provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department’s policy
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department’s policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department’s policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- wellbeing and health 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

- [Student Support Groups](#)
- [Individual Education Plans](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Behaviour Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Identifying students in need of support

Murchison Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Murchison 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
- self-referrals or referrals from peers

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.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

Student behavioural expectations and support

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Murchison Primary School's Bullying policy.

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 our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Murchison Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

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
- referral to Student Support Services
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- 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.

The Principal of Murchison 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.

Engaging with families

Murchison 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 homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students

Evaluation

Murchison 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

Murchison Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Made available in hard copy from office upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carers 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](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	15 th June 2022
Consultation	School Council 15 th June 2022 Parents
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2023