



Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

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.

Malvern Central 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 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.

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The implementation of the Student Engagement Policy is a shared responsibility between school, home and the school community. This policy is divided into the following sections that outline the way in which the Malvern Central School community seeks to achieve the purpose of this policy.

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1. DEFINITION

Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components:

- **Behavioural engagement** refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.
- **Emotional engagement** encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school and measures a student's sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.
- **Cognitive engagement** relates to each student's investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation.

2. AIMS

- To engage all students in learning.
- To meet the developmental needs of all students.
- To foster a positive school culture based on respectful relationships between all members of the school community.
- To provide students with a safe learning environment, where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure.
- To foster high standards of behaviour based on the school values of Respect, Integrity, Community, Innovation and Perseverance
- To have each student attend school every day, except in cases of illness or other exceptional circumstances.
- To provide support for individuals who are at risk of disengaging, not attending or developing inappropriate behaviours.
- To provide support for students who are adversely affected by the inappropriate behaviour of other students.

3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Malvern Central School is located in Malvern, in the City of Stonnington. Established in 1875, the School has built its own unique identity in the local and wider community. The school has two campuses:

- Park Street – Foundation to Year 2; and
- Spring Road: Year 3 – Year 6.

The Malvern Gardens are located between the two campuses enabling our students and teachers to access an expanded space for learning, play and physical education. There are currently 470 students enrolled, predominantly from an English speaking background. However, our School is enjoying an increasingly diverse school community.

The School is organised into straight year levels and is contemporary in its approach to educating our students who learn in an environment that is conducive to preparing them for a rapidly changing world that demands technological capacity and intelligence, heightened interpersonal skills, significant emotional intelligence, resiliency and strong literacy and numeracy skills. Teams of teachers plan together, instruct, assess, and moderate student work, then feedback to students to support personalising their learning. Teacher quality is crucial for optimal student

outcomes and so our energies are directed towards coaching and capacity building of our teaching staff.

All learning spaces have a range of digital devices including interactive screens, notebook computers, chromebooks, desktop computers and iPads. The School also offers a range of engaging activities to its students including camps from Year 2 to Year 6, excursions and in-school activities, a whole school theatre production, a coding/robotics club, a chess club, dancing and a learn to swim program.

The school is particularly proud of its progressive approach to educating students for the 21st century. The school leadership and staff of professional educators are intentional and purposeful in pursuing the optimal learning experiences for each student and as such, seek to provide all children with instruction that is personalised, contemporary, research-based, evidence-based and technologically rich.

Malvern Central School supports a proactive and restorative approach to assisting students to make appropriate choices about their behavior. The school has developed a Wellbeing strategy which encompasses the programs, procedures and policies to manage student behavior and to build the emotional literacy and resilience in our students. Through evidence based research programs such as the Resilience Project and Circle Time for Emotional Literacy, our students are explicitly taught lessons in Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness. The school also works closely with DET Student Support Officers and The Programs for Students with Disabilities to support students at risk or requiring support emotionally or academically. A Peer Mediator program consisting of Year 4- 6 students is also an initiative to allow students to be trained in a Leadership role and assist in the wellbeing of fellow students.

The school is committed to developing the leadership capacity of all our students by providing opportunities for them to hold roles of responsibility. Students on each campus may apply for leadership positions ranging from School Captains, House Captains, Junior School Council and smaller team captains and have the opportunity to be on teams which reflect student interests. Student representation across all grades is designed to develop a sense of connectedness to school, as we value each student's voice and potential to take action within the school

We are most proud of our school.

4. SCHOOL VISION

Creating independent, collaborative and contemporary thinkers with a passion for learning who make positive contributions as global citizens in an ever-changing world

5. SCHOOL VALUES

Respect

- We value and appreciate the strengths and skills of others and ourselves.
- We speak, act and treat others fairly and equally irrespective of individual differences.
- We treat all members of the school community equitably, justly and with kindness.
- We engage parents, carers and the broader community and acknowledge the vital role they play in supporting successful learning outcomes for all students.
- We learn from others and share our ideas.

Integrity

- We act at all times in a responsible and ethical manner.
- We are truthful, honest and caring.
- We ensure that the classroom and the school environment is positive, safe, caring and purposeful.

Community

- We foster a social responsibility both locally and globally.
- We foster a positive and inclusive culture based on healthy relationships between all members of the school community.
- We provide students with a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment, where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure.
- We foster high standards of behaviour based on school values.

Innovation

- We use evidence to reflect on how effective our practice is and look beyond what we currently do to identify best practice through research.
- We foster creativity and deep level learning to transfer our understandings, skills and knowledge from one context to another.
- We use technology to enhance our learning.
- We create contemporary and flexible learning spaces that support and inspire learning opportunities both individually and collaboratively.

Perseverance

- We are committed to continual improvement of learning.
- We strive to develop a deep understanding of our strengths and capabilities.
- We are risk-takers and agents of our own learning through constantly being challenged by creative learning activities.

6. ENGAGEMENT AND ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES

1. Uphold the right of every child to receive an education.
2. Monitor and follow up on absences in compliance with Department of Education and Training (DET) procedures.
3. Intervene early to identify and respond to student needs for social, emotional, and learning support.
4. Where resources allow, provide specialist support to assist teachers to meet the social, emotional and learning needs of students at risk.
5. Recognise and respond to students' needs through the *Program for Students with Disabilities* (PSD), language support programs and other DET initiatives.
6. Provide all staff, including pre-service and casual relief teachers and volunteers professional learning and support regarding student wellbeing issues.
7. Provide opportunities for students to participate in developing a positive school culture (e.g. student led assemblies, student leadership, buddy programs, Peer Mediators).
8. Provide opportunities for families and the wider community to participate in school activities (e.g. School Council and sub-committee meetings, classroom helpers, camps and excursions).
9. Communicate the school's expectations and support **parents/carers** to:

- Ensure that their children attend school as required by law. (*Every Day Counts*)
 - Familiarise with MCS Attendance Policy
 - Advise the school as soon as possible when their child is late or absent.
 - Ensure that student enrolment details are correct.
 - Provide all relevant information to the school.
 - Attend parent-teacher meetings and participate in 3 – way student conferences.
 - Read and respond to school communications in a timely manner.
 - Seek advice from the school if desiring to remove children for extended periods (e.g. holidays).
10. Develop positive relationships between teachers and students that promote engagement, wellbeing and learning.
 11. Engage with the development of Student Individual Learning Plans for relevant students.
 12. Deliver teaching and learning and extra-curricular activities and services that are inclusive and responsive to student needs, and that reflect the diversity of the school community.
 13. Use evidence - based and flexible pedagogical styles to cater for different learners and to engage all students in meaningful learning experiences.
 14. Teach and assess students using current pedagogical knowledge aimed at challenging and extending student learning.
 15. Promote pro-social behaviours using a range of resources (e.g. The Resilience Project, Circle Time for Emotional Literacy, Character Strengths, Positive Education strategies, restorative practices, Values education, Respectful Relationships).
 16. Communicate concerns about student wellbeing to parents/carers in a timely manner.
 17. Adhere to the ‘stepped’ behaviour management processes (Appendix 4).

Student Health and Safety

Malvern Central School has a proactive approach to student health with the continued provision of a first Aid room and all staff trained at Level 2 First Aid. In addition, staff are trained annually in the management and treatment of asthma and anaphylaxis.

Sunsmart School.

The school promotes sun smart behaviours with the wearing of hats for all outside activities in terms 1 and 4 and in terms 2 and 3 on days of higher UV ratings. Teachers are responsible for being alert on high UV rating days.

Parent Participation

Parent participation is important and we are continuously reviewing our Parent Participation Policy, in line with current research on home school partnerships and its impact on student learning and engagement.

Student Support Services

Malvern Central School is fortunate enough to have a DET Psychologist and Speech Therapists who actively contribute as members of the school community.

Professional Learning

Teacher professional learning is given high priority at Malvern Central School to ensure that teaching and learning approaches are based on deep level pedagogical understanding and are reflective of best practice.

Peer Observation and team teaching are opportunities for teachers to learn with, from and on the behalf of each other. Improvement to teaching and learning is supported by modelling of best

practice through Learning Specialists and Instructional coaches. Ongoing professional learning in DET initiatives and school based priorities will continue to be a focus at Malvern Central School.

Collaboration and Communication

At Malvern Central School we have a school wide understanding of the positive impact of parent's involvement in the development of student's behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement with learning. We foster a collaborative approach with parents through Compass, student planners, 'meet the teacher' interviews, individual learning plan interviews, reports, newsletters, educational forums, 3-way conferences, phone calls and student support meeting

7. POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES

1. Promote a respectful and inclusive school community culture.
2. Communicate high expectations (regarding student behaviour) with students and their families.
3. Use the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy as a basis for negotiating class-based shared expectations with students at the beginning of each school year and revisit this regularly throughout the year.
4. Through professional learning, build staff capacity to promote positive student behaviours (including specific behaviour management strategies and teaching about social skills) promote a team approach to behaviour management.
5. Provide support for students with behavioural issues (e.g. Students Support Officer Referral, Student-Support Groups, Positive Behaviour Plan, Individual Learning Plan).
6. Monitor student behaviour and the effectiveness of implemented strategies.
7. Work with parents/carers to promote understanding about how they can support positive student behaviours.
8. Build school wide and community understanding of the school values and how they translate from classroom to school yard.

8. EVALUATION

Malvern Central 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:

- The Attitude to School Survey
- Youth Resilience Survey
- school reports
- CASES21
- Compass
- SOCS
- the Parent survey
- case management work with students

9. OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies found on our website, such as:

- *Acceptable Use of Digital Resources Policy*
- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*

- *Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *Home School communication Policy*
- *Complaints and Concerns Policy*
- *Sunsmart Policy*
- *Facebook and Instagram Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Medication Management Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Management Policy*
- *Volunteers Policy*
- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Attendance Policy*
- *The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)*

Student Engagement Policy Guidelines retrieved **8th June, 2017** from:

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

Compass Education Website:

<https://www.compass.education/>

Restorative Practice:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/methodrestorative.aspx>

Every Day Counts:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/participation/everydaycountsprimparent.pdf>

All school policies and key documents need to be considered in relation to the *Student Engagement and wellbeing Policy*. This policy is to be read in conjunction with Appendix 1 – 8.

This policy was last updated on **Monday 24th February 2020** and is scheduled for review in **February 2023**.

10. APPENDIX 1 - RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS, STAFF AND PARENTS/CARERS

All members of the Malvern Central School community have a **right** to:

- fully participate in an environment free of discriminatory behavior – including racist, sexist, ability-based, class-based, gender-based and homophobic forms of harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, vilification, violence, intimidation, abuse and exclusion.
- be treated with respect and dignity.
- feel valued, safe and supported in an environment that encourages freedom of thought and expression.

All members of the Malvern Central School community have a **responsibility** to:

- acknowledge their obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and communicate these obligations to all members of the school community.
- actively participate in and contribute to a learning environment that supports the learning of self and others.
- ensure their actions and views do not have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of other members of the school community.

Students	
Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn in a secure, inclusive and positive environment. • To be valued and treated with respect, fairness and courtesy by all members of the school community. • To be supported in challenging situations. • To be free of harassment and bullying, including cyber bullying. • To be encouraged to be a good role model for other children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To come to school every day (except in exceptional circumstances). • To behave respectfully and appropriately at all times. • To respect, value and learn from the differences of others. • To provide support to others and seek help when needed. • To report bullying or other inappropriate behaviours to a teacher. • To respect school and other people's property. • To comply with all school policies and procedures.
Staff	
Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in a safe and secure environment. • To be treated with respect, fairness and courtesy by all members of the school community. • To be supported in challenging situations. • To be free of harassment and bullying, including cyber bullying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build positive relationships with students, parents/carers as the basis for engagement and learning and fairly implement the Student Engagement Policy. • To agree to uphold Child safe standards by having zero tolerance to child abuse, and will treat all allegations and child safety concerns very seriously • To have high expectations for all students. • To engage in constructive communication with students, staff and parents/carers regarding the learning of individuals. • To provide an inclusive, engaging and differentiated curriculum. • To treat all members of the school community with respect, fairness and dignity. • To be familiar with all relevant policies • To ensure attendance of students are documented everyday and reasons for lateness or absence are logged immediately.

Parents/Carers	
Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expect that their child/ren will learn in a safe and positive environment. • To be treated with respect, fairness and courtesy by all members of the school community. • To be free of harassment and bullying, including cyber bullying. • To expect a positive and supportive approach to their child's learning. • To be contacted by the school when the wellbeing of their child/ren is at issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure students attend school every day (except in exceptional circumstances). • To promote and model respectful communication and healthy relationships. • Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment. • To communicate with the school about student lateness and absence. • To participate in student support group meetings and follow up where necessary at home. • To be familiar with the Student Engagement Policy and other relevant policies.

APPENDIX 2 - BEHAVIOURAL CONSEQUENCES

At Malvern Central School we support a positive approach to behaviour and foster a school climate within which personal responsibility and self regulation can develop.

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- Play and learn cooperatively
- Treat and speak to others with respect and courtesy
- Resolve problems and disagreements calmly, sensibly and fairly
- Move and play safely inside and outside the school grounds
- Comply with all school policies
- Take care of the school environment and school property.
- Behave in a manner which is guided by the school values of respect, integrity, community, innovation and perseverance.

Consequences at Malvern Central School for inappropriate or unacceptable behaviours include:

- **The teacher:**
 - following the **3 R's** chain of student management:
 - The student is given a reminder (verbal or non-verbal) about acceptable behavior (**Remind**)
 - The teacher explains the situation to the student, drawing his/her attention to the agreed class expectations and School Values and is asked to reflect on his/her behaviour. (**Revisit**)
 - The student is asked to move temporarily to another class or be supervised by Principal Class (**Refocus**)
 - reflecting on behavioural issues or needs and plans to teach appropriate social skills explicitly
 - arranging for the student's behavior to be discussed with others which may include the child's parents/carers, DEET SSSO, Principal Class or Student Wellbeing team member. A Positive Behaviour Plan is formulated at this meeting
- **The student** may be asked to:
 - make up missed learning in his/her own time (No more than half the time allocated for any recess or lunch may be used for this purpose)
 - walk for a certain period of time with a yard duty teacher
 - provide a verbal or written statement or apology
 - complete some form of community service
 - repair or pay for damage to property or equipment
- **The school** may consider:
 - Suspension procedures (if disruptive or dangerous behaviour continues)
 - Expulsion and may be implemented.
 - immediate suspension, and possible involvement of relevant external authorities in cases of extreme inappropriate behaviour or physical violence.

The Education Training and Reform Act (2006) prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any Victorian Government school.

Inappropriate behavior is responded to through a staged response that has preventative and early intervention strategies, such as:

Teachers will:

- Build rapport with students and create positive and nurturing learning environments
- Develop quality curriculum teaching programs
- Make explicit behavioural expectations of students at the start of the year
- Unpack School Values and how they translate from classroom to yard.
- Teach specific social-skills such as:
 - Being more resilient
 - Anger-management
 - Making appropriate choices
 - Friendship/relationship building skills
 - Protective behaviours
 - Sexuality Education (Respectful Relationships)
 - Promoting character strengths
 - Restorative Practice
 - ABC Chart

Broader support strategies include:

- involving and supporting the parents/ carers
- involving the student wellbeing team
- mentoring and/or counselling
- convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- developing Individualised Learning, Positive Behaviour or Attendance Plans
- involving community support agencies.
- Peer Mediators

APPENDIX 3 – BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The following Behaviour Management process will be followed. Depending on the severity of the behaviour, the process may commence at any of the following six stages. In some cases, the process may be sequential.

1.

Discussion of the inappropriate behaviour with supervising teacher and students involved. The reason for the behaviour being inappropriate will be identified, apologies made and a warning given.



2.

Behaviour may result in the student being moved to another learning space. Length of time determined by teacher based on age and the issue. Behaviour recorded on Compass Chronical



3.

Restorative Chat with Student/s involved and Student Wellbeing Team member. Behaviour is recorded on Compass Chronical and may result in consequence (yard duty, detention for half of lunch time).



4.

Meeting with Principal/Assistant Principal and parents to arrange appropriate consequence and support
e.g. Mediation
Counselling
Positive Behaviour Plan
Suspension
Behaviour will be recorded, and management will include a Behaviour Management Plan or Positive Behaviour Plan



5.

Principal informs student and parents of suspension. Meeting prior to return to school to outline expectations for the future.



6.

Extreme inappropriate behavior or physical violence will result in immediate suspension, and possible involvement of relevant external authorities.
If, after repeated suspensions within Department of Education and Early Childhood Development guidelines, behavioural problems of a serious nature continue, the Principal and Assistant Principal will meet with student and parents leading to alternative schooling arrangements.

APPENDIX 4 – EXCLUSION PROCEDURES: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

At Malvern Central School, parents/carers are involved in exclusion procedures.

SUSPENSION – General Information

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and should only be used when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response.

Suspension should be used for the shortest time necessary. The maximum period of time a student can be suspended consecutively is five school days. 'School days', as referred to in this document, does not include weekends, public holidays or school holidays. A student cannot be suspended for more than fifteen school days in a school year, unless approval is sought from the Regional Director. However, a student may be suspended for a further period (not exceeding five school days) pending the Principal's decision whether to expel a student.

For further information:

- School Policy & Advisory Guidelines: Suspensions
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/suspensions.aspx>

EXPULSION – General Information

The school Principal has the authority to permanently exclude a student from his or her school according to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's procedures. This power cannot be delegated to any other person at the school level.

Permanent expulsion from a school is the most extreme sanction open to a Principal. Except in the most unusual and extreme circumstances, it will only be used after all other relevant forms of behaviour management outlined in the engagement guidelines have been exhausted.

For further information:

- School Policy & Advisory Guidelines: Expulsions
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/expulsions.aspx>

APPENDIX 5 –STAGED RESPONSE

A restorative chat approach is built upon the following key questions:

To the person(s) who caused harm:	To the person(s) harmed:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you please tell me what happened? • What were you thinking? What was in your head/in your mind? • Was it the right/wrong thing to do? • Who has been affected/upset/harmed by your actions? In what ways? • How has this affected you? • Is that fair? Can you do that? • What else do you need to do to make things better? How can you fix this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you think when it happened? • What have you thought about since? • How has it affected/upset/hurt/harmed you? • What has been the worst thing? • What is needed to make it right/to make you feel better? • Do you agree? • Is that fair?
<p>To both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we make sure this doesn't happen again? • Is there anything I can do to help? • Is there anything else you would like to say? • <i>Formally record agreement/congratulate them for working it out.</i> 	

A Staged Response

- This approach will be conducted in an informal way for minor incidents and be embedded in classroom teaching and learning.
- Serious incidents will require a more formal restorative session that involves Student Wellbeing Team, Assistant Principal, Principal and if necessary the DET Student Support Officer and all persons affected in the incident. The response will be documented.
- There will be situations where a formal conference involving the before mentioned people: parents, support persons and convener will be required (Student Support Group). Any imposed consequence will be imbedded in the restorative process that requires a response 'that makes things right' in relation to those who have been affected.

Where a restorative approach has previously been conducted and subsequently the behaviour continues, the school will constitute a further Student Support Group to devise strategies and approaches to address the behaviour. This may include intervention from specialist services and external agencies in the local community and the development of a Positive Behaviour Plan.

APPENDIX 6 - IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

Malvern Central School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Classroom teachers and leadership play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Malvern Central 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
- transition information

APPENDIX 7 – STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP GUIDELINES

A Student Support Group meeting may be held to exchange information and facilitate strategies to address social, emotional, academic and/or behavioural concerns. These meetings are to be held at a time suitable both to the school and to the parents/carers.

The procedures for such meetings will vary depending on the needs of individuals and schools, but they promote positive behaviours through a staged response.

As well as teachers, parents/carers and the student, the meeting could involve the Principal or nominee and any support staff who have been involved with the student and/or the student's family or who have particular relevant expertise or a person requested by the parents/carers.

The Principal or Assistant Principal must ensure suitable language interpretation facilities are made available, if relevant.

A brief written statement including a list of participants and agreed outcomes should be maintained to assist future problem-solving processes at the school. The statement should be verified by the parents/carers and/or student and remain confidential.

APPENDIX 8: ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Process map for following up absences:



