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| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | **Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy** | Murrabit Group School  March 2021 |

**Purpose**

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

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school’s policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Murrabit Group 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.

**Contents**

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
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5. Student rights and responsibilities
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**Policy**

1. **School profile**

### Murrabit Group School is a community centred school of 36 students, with 20 boys and 16 girls, where a dedicated team of 1 teaching principal, 2.4 teachers and .6 teacher aide and .4 business manager work together with the school community to provide positive educational outcomes for all students. The Murrabit township is located 3km from the Murray River in Northern Victoria, 30 km north of Kerang and 21 km west of Koondrook. The school serves a farming area with most students travelling to school by bus. The local Murrabit community has been greatly affected by the prevailing long term rural downturn but recent years has seen a rise in numbers with school numbers at their highest levels in 20 years. There has been a clear trend for families to have both parents/carers involved in, or seeking, part or full time employment, with employment coming from outside the farming sector. Our staff realise the joint responsibility in helping your child grow by providing an environment where children can develop to their highest potential in all areas through offering engaging programs across a broad range of learning styles. Students are grouped into 3 classes for Literacy and Numeracy blocks. The groupings are flexible but with a basic framework of P-1, 2/3/4 and 5-6. The school curriculum is supplemented by weekly visits from the MARC Van (Library), MACC Van (Art) and Music/Italian teacher; Bike Ed Program, an intensive swimming program, a fitness program, a Science Program in senior school and Arts Council Productions and membership of the Murray Plains Cluster involving inter-school sporting and camping events. The school has strong parent and wider community support which further enhances all children’s education at our school. The Murrabit Advancement Association provides the opportunity to use the monthly market as an outstanding means of raising funds locally, we have a very proactive Parents and Friends and a School Council that works cohesively to ensure the smooth running of the school.

1. **School values, philosophy and vision**

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| Our vision is ‘We want the children at Murrabit Group School to fly!” and our beliefs are based on the core values of respect, honesty, teamwork, learning and persistence.   • Respect: value yourself, others and the environment. • Honesty: being open and honest in all transactions with all people. • Teamwork: learning together to achieve the best possible outcomes. • Learning: developing and acquiring knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. • Persistence: through hard work, dedication and self-belief children can achieve their personal best. |

1. **Engagement strategies**

Murrabit Group School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. 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
* 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 and school level assessment data
* teachers at Murrabit Group 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 communicated to parents
* monitoring student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, class room and individual level
* create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through a fitness program, Italian program, music programs, buddy reading program, and regular whole school activity days.
* we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  + Respectful Relationships and
  + Anti Bullying Programs
* opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, Stephanie Alexander Garden and lunchtime activities)

*Targeted*

* connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
* all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
* 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
* staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

*Individual*

* Student Support Groups
* Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plans as needed
* Program for Students with Disabilities
* referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
* referral to ChildFirst, Headspace

Murrabit Group 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
* 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 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
* running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  + with a disability
  + in Out of Home Care
  + and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

1. **Identifying students in need of support**

Murrabit Group School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The teaching staff plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Murrabit Group 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

1. **Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of the Murrabit Group 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.

1. **Student behavioural expectations**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school’s Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Murrabit Group School’s Bullying Prevention policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Murrabit Group 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
* restorative practices
* detentions
* suspension
* expulsion

*Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions*

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular 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.

Further information for parents is also available at:

* [Procedure for Suspension](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Suspension%20information%20for%20parents%20and%20carers.pdf)
* [Information for Parent and Carers about Expulsions](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/studentmanagement/explusionsparentsandcarersaboutschool(PDF).pdf)

The Principal of Murrabit Group School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21. See <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>

*Corporal punishment*

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

1. **Engaging with families**

Murrabit Group 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, available on our school website
* maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
* providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
* involving families with 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.

1. **Evaluation**

Murrabit Group 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
* SOCS

**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 as annual reference in school newsletter
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

**Policy Review and Approval**

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| Policy last reviewed | 23 March 2021 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | March 2024 |