



Student Wellbeing and Engagement 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.

Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) 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. MEC 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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1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy, and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
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POLICY

1. School profile

MEC was established in 2006 and is located in the Central Goldfields Shire. We are a P-12 and Specialist School with approximately 1000 students enrolled. 30 school staff members including a school nurse, a wellbeing coordinator and counsellor.

Our school grounds back onto native bushland, and we are surrounded by a supportive community. Our school provides educational opportunities for students living in Maryborough and surrounding districts with a substantial number of bus travellers. MEC has developed close ties to the local community and enjoys support from our organisations and community services.

We are proud of our diverse and inclusive school community and strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

2. School values, philosophy, and vision

MEC's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff, and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of **respect, kindness and achievement** at every opportunity.

Our school's vision is to be an inclusive, connected, and flourishing learning community.

Our Vision and Values are available online at <https://mec.vic.edu.au/discover/our-values/>

3. Engagement strategies

MEC 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, tailored, and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below.

Universal

- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- An inclusive, engaging, and supportive culture
- A school environment that is welcoming for all parents/carers and responsive to them as partners in learning
- Evidence based planning through the analysis of a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Broad curriculum options including VET programs, VCE and VCAL ensure that students can choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths, and aspirations
- Implementation of the FISO 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
- A broad range of teaching and assessment approaches effectively responds 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, which 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 support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- Acknowledgement of positive behaviour and student achievement in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- Implementation of attendance improvement strategies monitor student attendance at a whole-school, cohort, and individual level
- Students are encouraged to speak with their Student Representative Members, teachers, Year Level Coordinators, Sub-school Leaders, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
- Opportunities for cross age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- Wellbeing support through Student Wellbeing Coordinators and the Student Services Team

- Academic, Social and Emotional Learning support through the Student Engagement and Learning Framework (SELF). The SELF includes over 300 programs and strategies such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Restorative Practices
 - Berry Street Educational Model
 - Peaceful Kids
 - Safe Schools
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sports teams, clubs, recess, and lunchtime activities)

Tailored

- Year Level Coordinators are responsible for all students in their year level. They monitor the wellbeing of students in their year and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support.
- Literacy support is offered through literacy tutorials with designated tutors for students requiring extra literacy support.
- Students from Years 7-12 are assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- Koorie students are connected with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer and have an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG). They also have the opportunity to utilise services offered and engage with Nalderung.
- Students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG), and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- Students with additional needs have an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) plus support and interventions to give them access to learning experiences on the same basis as their peers.
- Students with an intellectual disability will be offered placement at the MEC Specialist Setting
- Students with language delays are supported by speech therapists and our SPAides program.
- Year 10 students are assisted in planning their Year 10 work experience which is supported by their Career Action Plan
- Student Wellbeing Support officers and our School Nurse undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- Students requiring wellbeing support can seek support from our Student Wellbeing Support officers, Mental Health Practitioner, Family Liaison Officer, Allied health professionals and Doctors in Schools
- Staff apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma applying Berry Street Education Model strategies and Student Support Plans

Individual

MEC 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 Education Plan and/or a Student 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
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

- Nurture Program
- Alternate Program
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mentor](#)
- Mental Health Practitioner
- MYLNS Coaches
- [Student Support Plans](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- Teacher assistant support
- Family Liaison Officer
- Remote Learning Program
- Alternate Timetables
- Disability Inclusion Model
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

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
- 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.

4. Identifying students in need of support

MEC 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. MEC 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, incident, and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- staff referrals to student services, mental health practitioner, Doctors in Schools/nurse practitioner and allied health support professionals
- parent referrals to student services, mental health practitioner, Doctors in Schools/nurse practitioner and allied health support professionals

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of MEC 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.

6. Student behavioural expectations and processes

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Vision and Values.

When a student acts outside of our Statement of Values, Maryborough Education Centre will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores, and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour through the Student Engagement and Learning Framework.

The MEC Behaviour Support Process 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. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

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 MEC is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

7. Engaging with families

MEC 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.

8. Evaluation

MEC 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

MEC 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 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

- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Bullying Prevention](#)
- [Child Safety Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct-DET](#)

APPENDICES

- *MEC Student Support Process*
- *MEC Student Support Process for Staff P-6*
- *MEC Student Support Process for Staff 7-12*

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Policy last reviewed | 23 rd February 2022 |
| Consultation | November & December 2021- Positive Climate for Learning Leadership Team. |
| Approved by | Anita Ford School Council President |
| Next scheduled review date | This policy was last updated on 23 rd February 2022 and is scheduled for review as part of the school's 3-year review cycle. |

Signed:

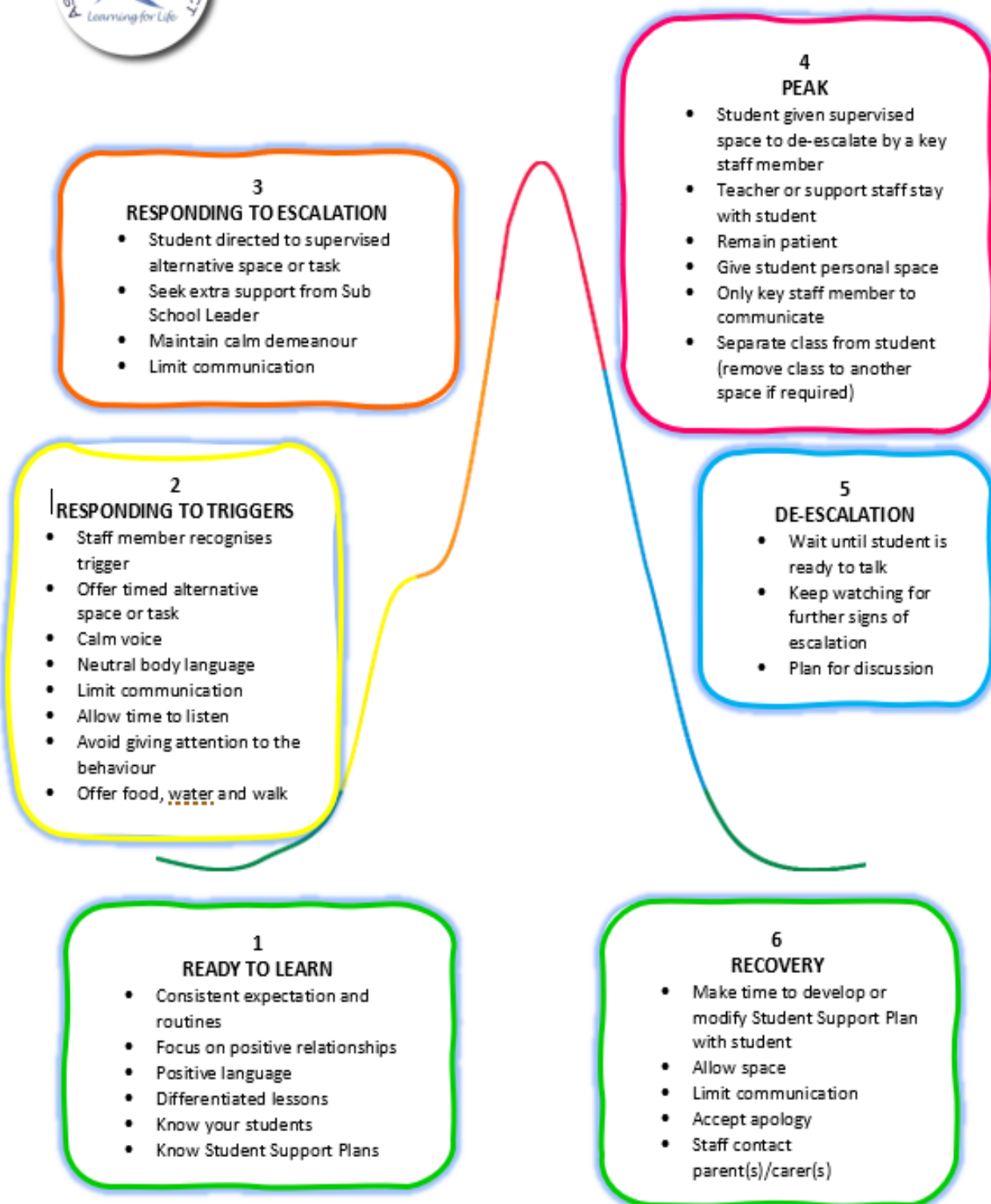


Anita Ford
School Council President

Date 25.2.2022



MEC Student Support Process for P-6 Staff



Reminder: Record incidents on Xuno and organise parent communication as required



MEC Student Support Process for 7-12 Staff

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RESPONDING TO ESCALATION

- Student directed to buddy room
- Use student's cool off card
- Student directed to alternative task
- Direct to new seating arrangement
- Seek extra support
 - Send student to seek help
 - Call/Email office for coordinator/sub school

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RESPONDING TO TRIGGERS

- Staff member recognises trigger
- Keep calm
- Offer different seating or task
- Limit communication
- Allow time to listen
- Avoid giving attention to the behaviour

1

READY TO LEARN

- Consistent class expectation and routines
- Focus on positive relationships
- Positive language
- Differentiated lessons
- Know your students
- Know Student Support Plans
- Monitor student engagement

4

PEAK

- Student directed to buddy room
- Continue teaching if reasonable to do so
- Give student personal space
- Avoid student communication
- Separate class from student (remove class to another space)

5

DE-ESCALATION

- Wait until student is ready to talk
- Keep watching for further signs of escalation
- Plan for discussion about the event at later date or time
- Staff contact parent(s)/carer(s)

6

RECOVERY

- Make time to develop or modify Student Support Plan with student
- Assure student of a fresh start
- Staff contact parent(s)/carer(s)

Reminder: Record incidents on Xuno and organise parent communication as required



MEC Student Support Process for Specialist Staff

