SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Produced in conjunction with our school community.
To be read in conjunction with the Effective Schools Policy and the Student Engagement Policy

Principal:
School Council President:

Reviewed: 17th of February 2010.
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**Summary**

In early 2009, The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) requested that all Government Schools in Victoria write a Student Engagement Policy. The DEECD also instructed all Government Schools to abolish the previous documents called The Student Code of Conduct. In creating this new Policy, the school has consulted teachers, students, parents and the School Council. The new Student Engagement Policy clearly articulates the rights, responsibilities and expectations of the school community. The following is a summary of each section.

**Section 1: School Profile Statement**
The school profile statement has been developed in conjunction with the school strategic plan. It reflects an extensive understanding of the diversity of the whole school community. Some key aspects considered in this section include:
- physical school location.
- physical aspects of the school such as classroom space, water use, land size and general aesthetics.

**Section 2: Whole School Prevention Statement**
The whole school prevention statement identifies the current programs and strategies that Mount Beauty Primary School has in place to promote high student engagement, attendance and positive behaviors. It is a positive statement that reflects on the engagement and wellbeing goals and targets identified in strategic and annual implementation plans. It also outlines the strategies used at Mount Beauty Primary School that improves student engagement.

**Section 3: Rights and Responsibilities**
The statement of rights and responsibilities in the Student Engagement Policy has been agreed upon by and applicable to students, staff and parents/carers. The rights and responsibility statement is phrased using positive language which encourages all members of the whole school community take equal responsibility for the promotion of their rights and responsibilities. This is not intended to be a list of ‘rules’ for students. For example: “Our students, their parents/carers and our staff will treat each other with dignity and respect at all times” “All members of our school community have the right to feel safe and welcomed in our school”.

**Section 4: Shared Expectations**
This section of the school Student Engagement Policy lists the shared expectations of principals, teachers and school staff, students and parents/carers. These shared expectations are not only around behaviour and attendance but around participation, resources, relationship building, the physical environment, curriculum, provision of support and partnerships.

**Section 5: School Actions and Consequences**
In this section significant emphasis is placed upon issuing positive consequences for meeting high expectations. A focus on rewarding positive behaviour is equally as important as condoning inappropriate behaviour. In this section you will find a step by step approach to school actions and consequences.

The Student Engagement Policy will be reviewed each year at the March School Council meeting. Any questions on the content of the policy should be directed to the school Principal.
Section 1: School Profile Statement

Mount Beauty Primary School Vision:
Students at Mount Beauty Primary School become lifelong, autonomous learners, developing habits and methods which will sustain them long beyond their schooling years. This will be achieved by our commitment to providing all students with a high quality, challenging education within an inspiring, caring environment.

Why have a school engagement policy? We are very fortunate in the Upper Kiewa Valley that we live in a lovely caring community and generally the students are very well behaved. However there are times when students make poor decisions, therefore we as a community must ensure all students are attending school in a safe manner.

Profile:
The township of Mt Beauty, situated approximately, 85 kilometres from Albury – Wodonga, was established in 1948 during the construction of the Kiewa Hydro- Electric Scheme. While a new hydro-electric construction has been built over the last two years, most of the student population is now drawn from families involved in farming, tourism and services.

Students are drawn from the town with some travelling from nearby Tawonga. While mostly of Anglo Saxon origin, two students from Language Background other than English (LBOTE) are now enrolled at the school, one from India and one from Malaysia. While these students have been at International schools, there are two teachers on staff who are trained in English as a Second Language (ESL).

The enrolment in 2008 was 111 students; in 2009 it is 135 and it is anticipated to rise over the next two years because of a ‘baby boom’ stimulated by the Government ‘Baby Bonus’. This will provide a challenge in terms of classroom space. Currently the class structure is Prep, Years 1 & 2; Years 3 & 4 and Years 5 & 6. The buildings have been adapted to allow for shared teaching spaces between groups, eg between Year 2 and Year 3. There are shared computer pod arrangements between classrooms. Staffing is seven EFT and a principal. There is an Art and library teacher and a teacher training as a Reading Recovery teacher, withdrawing students Years 3-6 for Multi Lit, working with PSD funded children and coordinating curriculum. In the past three years, seven new teachers, including the principal, have been appointed. The nearby snowfields ensure a good field of young vibrant teachers apply and the experienced teachers still on staff have provided excellent mentors.

In recent years, all Year 6 students exiting the primary school have moved across the road to Mt Beauty Secondary College.

The school provides an Out of School Hours program. It also manages the programs at Dederang and Tawonga primary schools.

The school has an active School Council and further community involvement is encouraged through community forums. Parent involvement is encouraged in a number of ways: from classroom helpers to tuck shop and fundraising.

Facilities have improved. There is a well equipped library, Art room, Multi Purpose room, canteen/tuckshop and adventure playground area. All classrooms are equipped with electronic whiteboards, there is a large covered space for assembly, and the school has received awards for environmental friendliness. Staff facilities are attractive and inviting and there is currently a minor building project being undertaken to provide a more inviting entrance to the school, sick bay and interview room.

The School Engagement Policy is underpinned by these principles:

- All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect.
- Students have a right to work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambitions.
• Parents have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged.

• Teachers have a right to expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment.

• Parents have an obligation to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.

• Principal and staff have an obligation to reasonably and consistently implement the Student Engagement Policy.
Section 2: Whole School Prevention Statement

At Mount Beauty Primary School we are very positive about our children’s behaviour. At Mount Beauty Primary School we look at being proactive when it comes to behavioural management. We actively seek the best social skills program and explicitly teach these programs so that we end up with a school community that upholds our values and beliefs without having to teach children through punishment. At Mount Beauty Primary School we like to:

1. Create a positive school culture
2. Build a safe, supportive and respectful relationships
3. Promote pro social values and behaviours
4. Encourage student participation
5. Proactively engage parents and carers
6. Implement preventative and early intervention programs
7. Respond to individual students
8. Link to the community

Is saying this, the principal and staff may use a variety of measures when a student’s behaviour does not comply with the School Engagement Policy. These measures take into account the age and disabilities and impairments of the students and the nature and seriousness of breaches of the Student Engagement Policy.

When a student violates rules under the School Engagement Policy, teachers should impose consequences that are consistent with the rules. Rules and consequences must be clearly explained. Students should understand the connection between their behaviour and the consequence. Consequences are graded in severity, with emphasis on students being accountable for their behaviour.

At Mount Beauty Primary School we have the following programs and strategies in place that promote high student engagement, attendance and positive behaviours. The programs and strategies are broken into a staged response: Early Intervention and Primary Intervention

Early Intervention

- Prep introductory program (term 1 for four weeks)
- Explicit use of Restorative Practice techniques.
- Social Skills Programs (student and classroom dependent – examples include ‘Friendly Kids Friendly Classrooms’, ‘Games Factory’, ‘Circle Time’ – social skills are explicitly taught 30 minutes a week).
- Early intervention for students at risk. This includes reports from previous schools or kindergarten, reports from parents/care givers and assessments by teachers.
- School attendance targeted with items in the newsletter and the school website.
- Clear statements of expectations regarding student attendance communicated to parents.
- Special celebration days – welcome breakfast, school open night, book fair parade, footy fun day.
- Parents welcomed to both Monday and Friday assemblies.
- Parents are encouraged to assist in classrooms and in other areas of the school.
- Weekly student awards.
- Prep buddies with year 6 students
- Cross-age reading (year 1 and year 6).
- School Student Representative Council.
- Extensive school sports program.
- Interschool sports including athletics, swimming carnival, fun run and infant sports day.
- Attendance at Zone, Regional and State level sporting events is supported and encouraged.
- Term 2 electives (for prep to 6).
• Skiing program.
• Involvement of parents and school council in policy making.
• Involvement of parents and school council in developing the school strategic direction.
• All teachers complete an annual Performance and Development Plan that includes strategies for student engagement.
• Ensure the Annual Implementation Plan includes student engagement programs.
• Develop assessment programs that are monitored and filed. Development of the school share point for staff communication and student records.
• School excursions and camps.
• School incursions and performances.
• School music program with the Secondary College and private tuition.
• End of year concert and graduation program.
• Year 6 breakup day.
• Kindergarten to Prep transition program.
• Year 6 to year 7 transition program.
• Chicken program.
• Water watch.
• Community members encouraged to be involved in our school.
• Garden program.
• National Park program.
• Development of outside play equipment and whole school master plan.
• Bike Education.
• Life Education.
• Encouragement of walking to school days.
• Active after school program.
• Out of School Hours Care.

Primary Intervention

• Welfare support (Child psychologist and counselling)
• Referral Protocols to educational specialists (eg. Speech and OT).
• School attendance letter sent home every time a student has an unexplained absence.
• Monitoring and recording of absences.
• Anti Bullying posters and slogan, eg It's not cool to be cruel.
• Cyber bullying posters and information to parents.
• Soft and close communication (staff approach to talking to students – Move closer to the student and speak softly).
• Conduct two parent/student and teacher interviews each year.
• Individual Learning Plans for students 6 months below expected levels and 12 months above expected levels.
• Lunch time activities, eg netball, choir, art.
• Encouraging fundraising within the school and the wider community, eg. Mini fete, bandana day, jeans for genes.
Section 3: Rights and Responsibilities

Every member of the Mount Beauty and surrounding community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. We believe everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

Mount Beauty’s school rights and responsibilities have been agreed on by our students, parents and teachers and have been developed in consideration of the four following Acts (these Acts can be found in the Appendix).

1. Equal Opportunity Act
2. Charter of Human Rights Act
3. Disability and Discrimination Act
4. Education and Training Act

1) Education
All students have the right to an education and shall be recognized without regard to race, colour, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or ability to pay.

Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, conformance to school rules and regulations, and the responsibility not to interfere with the education of fellow students or the orderly operation of the school.

Parents’ responsibilities are to ensure children attend regular school and to support the school rules and regulations.

The school has an obligation to teach its students and teachers as well as train staff in appropriate strategies regarding bullying and cyber bullying.

2) Environment
Students have the right to expect a safe school environment in which to learn and a climate within the school that is conducive to learning.

Students have a responsibility to help the school staff in operating a safe school by abiding at all times to the school rules.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school rules.

3) Respect
Students have a right to expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from members of the school staff and other students.

Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of their fellow students and to respect both the rights and authority of teachers, school staff and the school Principal.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school and support their child in behaving in a respectful manner whilst at school towards teachers, students and property.

4) Property
Students have a right to expect that other students and school personnel will respect their personal property.

Students have the responsibility to respect personal property, rights of other students, teachers, school staff and the Principal, as well as public property, including equipment and school buildings. Students are responsible for the personal property that they take to school, on a school camp and excursion, or on a school bus.
Parents have the responsibility to explain to their children the school’s expectations regarding property and the school policies.

5) Participation
Students are expected to participate in all school activities. However, students who do not comply with all school rules and regulations may lose the opportunity to participate in school camps and excursions and other day to day school based activities.

Students have a responsibility to comply with all rules and regulations governing student conduct at all school-sponsored functions.

Parents have the responsibility to ensure their children comply with school rules and regulations.
Section 4: Shared Expectations

At Mount Beauty Primary School we promote shared expectations of principals, teachers and school staff, students and parents/carers. These shared expectations are around participation, resources, relationship building, the physical environment, curriculum, provision of support and partnerships and include behaviour and attendance.

Shared expectations at Mount Beauty Primary School are:
- clear and specific
- positive and focussed on pro-social behaviours
- supported by procedures and programs to ensure success
- consistent, fair and reasonable
- linked to appropriate actions and consequences

Expectations of students at MBPS include:
- positive participation
- ask for help/ask questions
- enjoy being in class
- treat classmates/teachers with respect and dignity
- value school resources
- attendance is regular
- support classmates/teachers

Expectations of teachers at MBPS include:
- create an engaging lesson
- provide enjoyable classrooms
- make sure every student has an equal opportunity to participate
- ask for student input into the curriculum and class environment
- listen to students and value their contribution
- listen to parents insights into their children’s learning
- provide a wide range of resources to engage students
- understand the needs of students and accommodate those needs

Expectations of the principal at MBPS include:
- provide leadership, not only to school staff but to students as well
- ensure staff, students and the wider school community understand their expectations
- staff and students have the resources and equipment to assist them in the process of teaching and learning
- the curriculum of the school takes into account the needs of specific students where applicable (such as students with disabilities, ESL)
- encourages the participation of parents

Expectations of parents/carers at MBPS include:
- support for their children attending the school
- cooperate with requests from the school
- promote positive educational outcomes for their children
- ensure their children are attending school
- communicate clearly with the school about the needs of their children
Section 5: School Actions and Consequences

The principal and staff may use a variety of measures when a student’s behaviour does not comply with the school’s Student Engagement Policy. These measures should vary to take into account the age and disabilities and impairments of the students and the nature and seriousness of breaches of the Student Engagement Policy.

Actions and consequences used are to be seen as having an educational role and aim to foster positive relationships and retain the dignity of the student. School actions and consequences respond to inappropriate behaviour through an incremental and staged response that has a prevention and early intervention focus.

When a student violates rules (Please refer to Appendix for school rules and bullying policy) under the Student Engagement Policy, teachers should invoke consequences that are consistent with the rules. Rules must be clearly explained so that students understand why they have been punished. The student should understand the connection between the behaviour and the consequence. Consequences should be graded in severity, with emphasis on students being accountable and learning to take responsibility for their behaviour.

The following is a step by step approach to school actions and consequences:

**STEP 1:**
- Teacher chat
- Reminder of the school rules
- Verbal reprimand
- Apology

**Step 2:**
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class, student could be moved to a different class for a length of time.
- Time out

**Step 3:**
- Discuss with Principal, Welfare co-ordinator or senior staff
- Immediate withdrawal from class or yard to supervised area outside the office.
- Staff member takes a record - Behaviour forms and/or incident reports

**Step 4:** Following actions will be taken by principal in conjunction with the staff involved
- Parent’s are informed / Discipline meeting arranged, where appropriate
- Counselling /restorative justice action taken

**Step 5: Serious Breaches of Student Discipline**
- Principal, staff and parents involved will follow DEECD guidelines for the Student Engagement Policy.
  A. Behavioural contract meeting with parents and principal. Parents and principal to sign. Students warned that if they break the contract they are suspended (level of suspension depends on severity of behaviour).
  B. Student breaks contract. Parents informed.
  C. Student suspended (school will follow the course of action signed off by parents and the principal in the behavioural contract.
  D. Students who continue to break student behavioural contracts will be considered for Expulsion.
  E. Expulsion shall follow the guidelines set out by the DEECD in their student engagement handbook.
Appendix
1. Move and play safely.

2. Care for yourself, others and property.

3. Resolve problems calmly, sensibly and fairly.

4. Respect others through your speech and manners

5. Work as well as you can and allow others to do the same.
Appendix 2

MOUNT BEAUTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Specific School Rules

______________________________________________________________________________

LEARNING: “Work as well as you can and allow others to do the same”

Typical unacceptable behaviours include:

- Lateness
- Interrupting or disrupting the learning of others
- Not obeying instructions
- Not sharing equipment
- Talking out of turn

COMMUNICATION: “Respect others through your speech and manners”

Typical unacceptable behaviours include:

- Being discourteous or impolite
- Using inappropriate or obscene language
- Using intimidating or discriminating language, eg: “put downs”, teasing, name calling, racist or sexist comments

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: “Resolve problems calmly, sensibly and fairly”

Typical unacceptable behaviours include:

- Physical aggression, eg: fighting, tackling
- Use of put down comments or insults
- Name calling
- Deliberate exclusion from activities
- Swearing
SAFETY:  “Move and play safely”

- This applies to safe behaviour and the safe use of equipment

Typical unacceptable behaviours include:

- Running inside the building
- Pushing, shoving, punching or hitting
- Running around corners
- Running in or through the Prep/1/2 area
- Running through all under cover areas
- Cricket and kick to kick (or any other vigorous ball game) in the under cover areas
- Contact games
- Climbing trees
- Throwing dangerous objects
- Unsupervised riding bicycles/scooters and skateboards in the school ground
- Playing in the sun without a wide brimmed hat during the beginning of September to the end of April
- Leaning back on chairs
- Leaving the playground without permission
- Displaying unsafe behaviour to and from school.

ENVIRONMENT:  “Care for yourself, others and property”

Typical unacceptable behaviours include:

- Littering
- Damaging property
- Graffiti
- Bags and clothing not hung up on the corridor pegs
- Not eating in the designated places
- Touching other people’s things without permission from the owner
- Playing in and around the toilets.
- Playing and being in the bike shed during school hours.
- Coming into classrooms or corridors without teacher permission, including before school.
- Getting intentionally dirty/wet/muddy
**Definition:**

Bullying is when one person, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

There are three broad categories of bullying.

**Direct physical bullying** e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.

**Direct verbal bullying** e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse. (Put downs)

**Indirect bullying** - This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the victim’s back. It is designed to harm someone’s social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
- lying and spreading rumours
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone’s social reputation and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages or chat rooms to humiliate and distress.

**Rationale:**
- The school will provide a positive culture where bullying behaviour is not accepted. All students and adults will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment and have the responsibility to allow others to feel safe.

**Aims:**
- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation when deemed appropriate.
- To ensure that agreed and consistent disciplinary measures are implemented which are consistent with the ‘Departmental Guidelines for Developing the Student Code of Conduct’.

**Implementation:**
- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school’s position on bullying.
- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

**A. Primary Prevention   B. Early Intervention   C. Intervention   D. Action**

**A. Primary Prevention:**
- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school’s programs and response.
- To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
The following surveys will be undertaken annually or where appropriate: Parent survey, Attitudes to School survey, Staff survey and classroom surveys.

- Teachers to review and clarify the school policy on bullying at the start of each year.
- The curriculum to include anti-bulling messages and strategies.
- Electives and structured activities available to students at some recess and lunch breaks.
- Advertise to the community that welfare support and programs are available through the school.
- Student Welfare agenda items are included at all staff meetings.

B. Early Intervention:

- Encourage students, staff and parents to report incidents of bullying.
- Provide a safe environment for all children at all times.
- Publicly recognise and reward positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- Provide welfare support and programs to the school community.

C. Intervention:

- Once identified, bullies, victims and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Bullies will be offered counselling and support.
- Victims and family will be offered ongoing counselling and support.
- If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented, consistent with the school’s Student Code of Conduct.
- If staff bullying persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.
- If bullying by other school community members persists the principal will commence relevant procedures.

D. Action:

- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:
  - exclusion from class.
  - exclusion from yard.
  - withdrawal of privileges
  - ongoing counselling from appropriate agencies for both victim and bully.
  - school suspension.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- Classroom meetings.
- Support structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.
- Consequences for adults will be individually based and may involve:
  - counselling
  - a period of monitoring
  - a formal support group
  - disciplinary action/ legal action

E. Evaluation:

- Annual student surveys will be undertaken as a measure of the effectiveness of this policy.
- This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input.

- If any parent has concerns please bring the matter to our attention promptly.
Rationale:
Positive and responsible student behaviour is essential to the smooth running of the school, to the achievement of optimal learning opportunities, and to the development of a supportive and cooperative school environment.

Aims:
• To build a school environment based on positive behaviour, mutual respect and cooperation.
• To manage poor behaviour in a positive and professional manner.
• To establish well understood and logical consequences for student behaviour.

Implementation:
• Our school will develop, through a process of wide community consultation, a student code of conduct, which outlines amongst other things, agreed behavioural development and management strategies.
• Our code of conduct will place significant emphasis on the development and recognition of positive behaviours.
• Student individual academic reports will include details regarding student behavioural achievement.
• Peer mediation and peer counselling will be key strategies employed to guide and develop student behaviour.
• The school will deliberately engage the services of guest speakers or workshop facilitators etc to act as positive role models.
• Whole school rules will be negotiated with the Student Representative Council.
• We will provide a wide range of positive extra-curricula activities for students including sporting, theatrical, leadership, community service and appropriate leisure pursuits.
• Positive student behavioural achievement will appropriately recognised.
• An up-to-date database of student behaviour will be maintained.
• All staff will undertake professional development on student behaviour and discipline management.
• The school curriculum will include units on resilience, peer pressure, positive choices, bullying, conflict resolution and leadership.
• Students experiencing difficulty achieving positive behavioural outcomes will undertake individualised behaviour management programs focussing upon agreed goals.
• Consequences for ongoing inappropriate behaviour may include counselling, loss of privileges or suspension.
• Parents will be kept informed, and actively encouraged to assist in the development of their children's behavioural performance.

Evaluation:
This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in... June 2008
Appendix 5

Links

The following is a link to the Equal Opportunity Act.

The following is the link to the Charter of Human Rights.
http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

The following is a link to the Disability and Discrimination Act.

The following is a link to the Education and Training Act

The following is a link to Effective Schools Model.

The following is a link to Student Engagement Policy Guidelines.