



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.

Myrtleford P12 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
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

Policy

1. School profile

The College is located in the rural town of Myrtleford in North East Victoria, 290 kilometres from Melbourne. Myrtleford has a population of 3,000, but has the infrastructure of a much larger town. Our College belongs to the Ovens Murray Area and is in the Alpine/Towong Network.

During the past few years we have experienced a significant growth with enrolments increasing from 230 in 2014 to 350 in 2019. The College has an SFO of 0.53 (down from 0.63 in 2014) and has 56 (40.9 EFT) staff. There are 2.0 principal class officers, 27.8 teaching staff and 11.1 education support staff.

At Myrtleford P12 College we know that an orderly learning environment and high expectations are essential in ensuring that all students learn and reach their full potential. We are both passionate and determined to provide our students with the necessary skills, discipline and qualities needed to become successful 21st century learners and responsible members of the community. Myrtleford P-12 College has chosen the by-line *inspirational* and is underpinned by our College values – Be Safe : Be Responsible : Be Respectful : Be a Responsible Community Member.

At Myrtleford P12 College we have high expectations of staff, students and parents. We offer a curriculum with a strong focus on numeracy and literacy, with many opportunities for extra-curricular extension. As students progress through the College we strive to offer a diversity of pathways to meet the needs and interests of our students. Senior students at Myrtleford P12 College have access to comprehensive VCE, VET, VCAL and school based apprenticeship programs.

Our College is a busy place where students participate and excel in activities outside the classroom. Examples of activities available to students are; intra and interschool sport competitions, the MART snow program for interested students every winter, instrumental music lessons, excursions/camps and leadership opportunities.

At Myrtleford P12 College we recognise that a productive and trusting school - home partnership is vital in ensuring our students are happy and successful learners. Student and parent surveys show that our students feel safe and connected to the College and their peers.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Our College is a community of enthusiastic, energetic, engaged teachers and learners who strive for excellence.

The school has four fundamental values, with which all students are familiar and which were developed in 2009 as the basis of our Positive Behaviour support system:

Be respectful

Be Responsible

Be safe

Be a responsible community member

3. Engagement strategies

Myrtleford P12 College 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.

Myrtleford P12 College has the following programs and partnerships in place to promote high student engagement, attendance and positive behaviours.

- ▲ Restorative practice: Restorative conversation model which promotes reflection and empathy towards others
- ▲ School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- ▲ P12 Schooling project: we have been a participant in a joint CEP/Department of Innovation and Next Practice Division project looking at leadership for P12 schooling. The focus of the project has been on individualised learning.
- ▲ Communities that Care: under the leadership of Alpine Health, the Alpine Shire schools are working collaboratively with local agencies to introduce Communities that Care to Myrtleford and so strengthen the capacity of our young people to deal with the health issues identified in the community atlas.
- ▲ Collaborative relationships exist with NECAMHS, Alpine Health, Ovens & King Community Health Service, and NESAY (North East Support and Activities for Youth). These relationships enable us to more effectively support children and young people with
- ▲ Our school has a strongly supportive relationship with the two Catholic schools in Myrtleford. We share VCE, VET and VCAL provision with Marian College. Teachers from all three schools and the pre-school meet three times per year to share professional learning.
- ▲ Active After school communities is run from our partner school four afternoons per week, providing healthy activity and fruit for children from Prep to Year 6.
- ▲ A dedicated staff member attends to attendance issues identified through the Compass System
- ▲ Managed Individual Pathways plans for students in Year 8 and above encourage students to see attendance, engagement and vocational pathways as crucial to their achievement.
- ▲ MYCAL (Middle Years Certificate of Applied Learning) operates for year 8/9 students which allows them to pursue trade options and Work Related Skills
- ▲ The school is organised into 2 Professional Learning Teams incorporating F-6 and Year 7-12. Staff meet on Mondays and Wednesdays. The Leadership Team of Principal, Deputy Principal, F-6 Team Leader and 7-12 Team Leader
- ▲ A regular schedule of school assemblies provides opportunities for student public speaking and leadership, as well as sustaining the sense of community within the student body.
- ▲ A team of welfare coordinators meets fortnightly, and includes representatives from service providers.
- ▲ Cooperative relationships with local industry and commerce are formalised through the creation of an Industry Advisory Group.
- ▲ Acknowledgement Awards for displaying College values

- ▲ A 'Start Right' program in the primary section has been working for six years. This program is conducted in Term 1 and focuses on the development of a classroom community with negotiated rules.
- ▲ Programs such as 'Fresh Fruit Friday' and 'Walk to School day' provide a health focus and give the students enjoyable experiences together with their teachers, thus improving connectedness.
- ▲ Significant teachers are allocated at year 7
- ▲ Year level coordinators and assigned to year 8/9 and year 10/11/12
- ▲ Career action plans are allocated from year 7 to year 12
- ▲ All Koorie students are connected to a regional Koorie support officer where applicable.
- ▲ The Resilience Project taught P-8 which helps students develop Gratitude, Empathy, and Mindfulness and learn Emotional Literacy.
- ▲ Student Support Teacher to help build social skills with targeted students
- ▲ 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
- ▲ Myrtleford P12 College will assist all year 9 to 12 students through work experience through a Career Pathways Support Officer
- ▲ Welfare committee will evaluate all students having experienced trauma and develop a support plan to assist students staff and families
- ▲ Individual Education Plans will be developed for all students 12 months below and 12 above expected level. Teachers can develop IEP for any students who need support in learning. Individual Behavioural Plans will be developed for students who show behavioural and social emotional issues
- ▲ The Welfare committee will refer students to SSS, Department of Human Services, Navigator and Lookout.

Myrtleford P12 College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement.

- ▲ 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 an Individual Behaviour Support Plan
- ▲ referring the student to:
 - Welfare Team who refers to SSO, Counselling and Psychological Services, Department of Human Services, Navigator Program

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

4. Identifying students in need of support

Myrtleford P12 College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing/Welfare team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Myrtleford P12 College 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

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

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

Students have the responsibility to:

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

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

6. 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 Myrtleford P12 College Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Myrtleford P12 College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- ▲ warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- ▲ teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- ▲ withdrawal of privileges
- ▲ referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- ▲ restorative practices
- ▲ detentions
- ▲ behaviour reviews
- ▲ suspension
- ▲ expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

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

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

7. Engaging with families

Myrtleford P12 College 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

Myrtleford P12 College 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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 29/3/2019 and is scheduled for review in March 2021.