



## **MOUNT ERIN COLLEGE**

### **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY**

#### **Child Safe Standards**

Mount Erin College is a Child Safe School. Our College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We value all students as individuals and their diversity. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision making.

Mount Erin College is committed to providing a Child Safe environment where children and young people are valued and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Our College takes a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to Child Safety to ensure that the safety of children is promoted, child abuse is prevented and allegations of child abuse are properly responded to. Mount Erin College has zero tolerance for child abuse.

#### **PURPOSE**

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

- our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- expectations for positive student behaviour
- support available to students and families
- our College's Policies and Procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Mount Erin College 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**

- School Profile
- School Values, Philosophy and Vision
- Engagement Strategies
- Identifying students in need of support
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Behavioural Expectations
- Engaging with Families
- Evaluation

## **POLICY**

### **School Profile**

*Mount Erin College was established in 1990 and is located approximately 30 kilometres south east of Melbourne. We have 920 students enrolled from Years 7 to 12 and almost 90 school staff members.*

Mount Erin College is a high performing school located in Frankston South, on a beautiful 15 hectare bushland setting. **Learning is our Priority** and we are dedicated to the success of every child. Teaching staff are skilled and innovative professionals focused on teaching and learning. They work hard to support every student to reach their potential; and to build those critical personal attributes of motivation, confidence, self-belief and resilience. Our teachers prepare students for the challenges of a rapidly changing world building opportunities for collaborative work and problem solving while encouraging curiosity, independence and reflection.

We are a school that sets high expectations for our students and our staff. The strength of the relationships between students, teachers and parents is highly valued and makes Mount Erin College stand out. Students are encouraged and supported to take risks in their learning, to strive for excellence and to achieve beyond their goals. We have a very clear vision for education and a set of values that reflect our belief that students can aspire. Our ASPIRE values: Adaptability, Social Awareness, Personal Best, Integrity and Excellence underpin all we do and create an inclusive learning environment, vital to maintaining this positive school culture.

Our Stage One Building project delivered stunning facilities that provide state of the art facilities across a wide range of specialist areas including, Science, IT, Art, Design and Technology. The architectural design has been informed by the latest in educational research on best practice in teaching and learning. Technology underpins the learning in all areas and the augmented sound system ensures our Deaf and Hard of Hearing students are well supported. It is a very exciting time to be part of Mount Erin College.

Mount Erin College is a high performing school, offering a wide range of programs to cater for diverse student interests and passions. This includes a SEAL (Select Entry Accelerated Entry) Program; a comprehensive Sport program including the Sports Academy for high achieving athletes; an Arts Academy for students who are passionate about the performing and visual arts, and rich and comprehensive range of subjects and electives across the middle and senior years. We offer a wide-ranging VCE program and encourage highly able Year 12 students to undertake an Enhancement Study at university to extend their learning. Our students continue to achieve excellent VCE results and are able to take advantage of the many well established partnerships with Universities that enable access to many exciting tertiary pathways.

The College has a dynamic Arts program, offering drama, instrumental music and voice, and a College choir – One Note. Students have the opportunity to get involved in the College Production each year, to further build their performance skills and confidence. With an extensive camps program of local, interstate and international destinations open to our families; a sister school in Indonesia; an active Student Leadership Program; it is a rich and supportive learning community.

Mount Erin College provides individualised support for Deaf and Hearing Impaired students in mainstream classes across all year levels. Staff in our Deaf Education Centre work closely with classroom teachers to provide an inclusive program for students across all year levels. We are the only government school in the South Eastern region that provides support for these student by highly trained staff.

The College has established outstanding community links with the Village Baxter and Peninsula Health providing many enriching opportunities for our students in terms of community service and building pathways opportunities. MESEM, our student leadership program, supports a wide range of charities through fundraising and activities throughout the year. We value this highly as our vision of success for young people involves them being actively involved in understanding and shaping their communities.

***Mount Erin College does not use Corporal Punishment as it is contrary to our College Values and is inconsistent with our Cooperative Classrooms and Respectful Relationships Policies.***

## **School Values, Philosophy and Vision**

Mount Erin College'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 ASPIRE values of Adaptability, Social Awareness, Personal Best, Integrity, Responsibility and Excellence at every opportunity.

*Our school's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best, and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.*

*Our Statement of Values is available online at: [www.mounterin.vic.edu.au](http://www.mounterin.vic.edu.au)*

## **Engagement Strategies**

Mount Erin College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour, cooperative classrooms that foster a positive learning culture 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 school), targeted (Year Level specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our College is included below:*

### **Universal**

Mount Erin College utilises a range of whole of school strategies to promote positive behaviour and foster learning including.

- *high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers*
- *promote positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing*
- *foster a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive through our Respectful Relationships Program*
- *promote a positive Learning Culture via our Cooperative Classrooms and Restorative Practices approach*
- *welcome all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning*
- *analyse and respond to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, Parent Opinion Data, Student Management Data and school level assessment data*
- *deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations*
- *teachers at Mount Erin College use the Mount Erin College Instructional Model 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*
- *teachers at Mount Erin College 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 communication to parents*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including Year Level meetings and via Year Level Student Forums. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*

- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through School Productions, Sport Programs, Music Programs and MESEM*
- *All students are welcome to self refer to the Student Services Team, School Nurse, Sub School and Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an ‘open door’ policy where students and staff are partners in learning*
- *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:*
  - *Respectful Relationships*
  - *Cooperative Classrooms*
  - *Safe Schools*
- *Programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)*
- *opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, MESEM, the Student Diversity Group and lunchtime activities)*

### **Targeted**

Mount Erin College employs a range of specific strategies, designed to address particular concerns in certain age groups or friendship circles such as those outlined below:

- *each Year group has a Year Level Leader who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *all students from Year 10 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future*
- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*
- *all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *Mount Erin College assists students to plan their Year 10 Work Experience, supported by their Career Action Plan*
- *the Student Wellbeing and Student Services Teams will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year*
- *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 Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Alternative settings operated by the Department of Education and Training*
- *David Scott School (previously Brotherhood of St Lawrence)*

Mount Erin College 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 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*
  - *Alternative settings operated by the Department of Education and Training or other Agencies*

*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.*

### **Identifying students in need of support**

*Mount Erin College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing and Student Services Teams play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Mount Erin 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*
- *referrals from staff members*
- *referrals from families or carers*

### **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 College's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to be:

- *treated in a respectful manner*
- *able to feel safe and included*
- *able to learn to their potential*

- Supported to develop their interests, talents and leadership skills
- participate fully in their education
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- treat others with respect
- act in a safe, orderly manner
- allow others to learn without interference
- follow staff instructions
- actively engage in their learning
- respect our College environment
- participate fully in their educational program

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.

### **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 Mount Erin College's Bullying Prevention Policy.*

Mount Erin College's Respectful Relationships and Cooperative Classrooms Policies are designed to promote positive behaviours that help develop a Positive Learning Culture across the College. These Policies are available on the College website [www.mounterin.vic.edu.au](http://www.mounterin.vic.edu.au)

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mount Erin 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 or 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 relevant Sub School or Year Level Leader*
- *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.**

## **Engaging with families**

Mount Erin 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 College 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
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## **Evaluation**

Mount Erin 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 Attitudes to School data
- incidents data
- school reports
- Parent Opinion data
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

The following Policies are available on the College website [www.mounterin.vic.edu.au](http://www.mounterin.vic.edu.au)

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Bullying Prevention Policy*
- *Respectful Relationships Policy*
- *Cooperative Classrooms Policy*
- *Child Safe Standards*

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This Policy was last updated in February 2018 and is scheduled for review in February 2020.