Mortlake College P12

Student Engagement
&
Well-Being Policy

**Produced in consultation
with the school community**

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1 School profile statement

Mortlake P-12 College serves the rural district surrounding Mortlake, a sheep, beef, cropping and dairy farming area about 50 kilometres north of Warrnambool. Enrolments in recent years have been falling and currently set at approximately 238.

Mortlake College is a Prep to Year 12 school with a focus on continuous improvement in every aspect of school life. We aim to maximise each student's potential so that all will experience success. Our school goals focus on improving our students' levels of achievement, from Prep through to Year 12 in all domains of the curriculum.

Families at our school have a mixed socio economic range and reflect a range of parental ages. We have several students enrolled who are of Aboriginal descent and a significant number of students of Maori descent. We have a very small number of students for whom English is a second language.

The school has three distinct learning teams to develop curriculum and learning approaches specific for the age groups of students, and the physical lay-out of the school reflects the curriculum groupings with areas set aside for P-4, 5-9 and 10-12. The Primary Art room was refurbished at the end of 2008 and now houses the Well Being Centre. The school has up to date and extensive facilities. Most classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards and the introduction of a 1:1 BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy in 2014 allows for all students to have 1:1 access to the internet.

A Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program introduced in 2013 gives all P-4 students the opportunity to be involved in a healthy eating program.

The school provides students with the opportunity to excel in a range of 'enrichment' programs: performing arts (which includes production and festival performances), instrumental music, equestrian, sporting teams and camps and excursions at all year levels, including bi annual overseas tours of NZ and Japan. We combine the best of a traditional approach to teaching with innovative and exciting programs at all levels.

Staff, students and parents take great pride in the appearance of the school and much work goes into maintaining such an attractive physical environment. School Council is working constantly to improve the learning conditions of all students.

From data from Early Years, NAPLAN, VET & VCE, students at Mortlake College can be certain that excellence can be achieved.

2.Whole-school prevention statement

Staff at Mortlake College are professional in their approach, caring in their relationships with students and experienced in helping students to develop work habits which will carry through into later life. We are also committed to developing and promoting values and behaviour that will lead to the development of young people who will not only take their place successfully in the wider world but be in a position to make a significant contribution to it.

The school aims to foster harmonious and effective communication between all members of the school community and thus improve the learning outcomes and sense of well being and engagement for our students. The school recognises the importance of strong staff/ student relationships and staff work actively to build these relationships both within the classroom and by participating in a wide range of extra curricula programs and activities. This allows students and staff to recognise each other as individuals, not just teachers and learners.

Mortlake College recognises the diversity of its student population. Extensive support is given to students with high academic needs. Reading Recovery is timetabled for every day of the week. Parent support programs are held every term for funded students and twice a year for other students at risk. At the senior end of the school students are offered a range of pathway options through to the end of year 12.

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practice is used both in resolving conflict and in encouraging student participation in what and how they learn, through the use of planning and feedback circles. Restorative Practice assists in helping students to feel safe and supported and promotes pro social values and behaviours.

Tolerance and respect are core values of the school philosophy. The values and language of the You Can Do It program are embedded in the curriculum at all levels and The Tribes program runs at years 3 and 4.

Transition programs run at school entry and at the significant transition points of years 4-5 and 7-8.

In the Early Years, classroom teachers and students are supported by a a leading teacher with a specific focus on student welfare, not only in the classroom but also in promoting and facilitating safe play options at lunchtimes. Principal class and SSOs provide extra assistance in the playground at recess and lunchtimes.

At years 5-7 students work together in a pastoral environment where the promotion of pro social values and behaviours takes timetable priority.
At years 5-12 students are involved in a vertical curriculum and in a House group which provides for careers planning and social and emotional well being programs. Students at Year 9 also have the opportunity to apply for placement at one of the Department of Education's Student Leadership schools for one term each year.

All students from Yr 8 – 12 have a MIPS plan. Students in Year 10 & 11 are involved in a comprehensive work experience program.

The school places great value on the participation of parents and carers in the life of the school and the education of their children.

Classroom teachers and House Mentors employ a range of measures for communicating with parents and carers, including parent teacher interviews, newsletters, email and phone calls.

Parent Helpers are an important and regular part of the P-4 sub school literacy program and the school provides specific training for these parents. Parents are also encouraged and welcome to help with camps and excursions, fund raising activities, school sports and performances.
The school has a well supported Parents Club who are represented on School Council.

A strong student leadership program runs throughout the school with student leadership teams taking on various responsibilities within their sub schools. Representatives from each sub school form the SRC who have a voice on School Council and play an important role in connecting students to the school.

Regular weekly assemblies for P-4 and P-12 provide an opportunity to recognise student success in a range of areas. At the end of year Presentation night for Years 5-12, a range of scholarships and certificates, along with excellence awards to recognise student academic achievement in each Key Learning Area. The Early Years and Middle Years sub schools also have end of year awards occasions to recognise outstanding attendance and diligent work. The graduating class of Year 12 students is formally recognised with a graduation ceremony and a school community dinner.

Mortlake College has a designated Secondary School Nurse and a School Chaplain who are involved in student welfare and counselling and provide assistance in planning and administration of health lessons. The school also employs a Welfare Officer 3 days per week to work with students at risk and to liaise with the school welfare group and outside agencies.

The issue of cyber safety and responsible use of electronic devices is something about which the school is very aware. As a 1:1 iPad school, responsible use of digital technology is an integral part of lesson planning and delivery.

To monitor student absences, the Secondary Teacher Assistant is employed in logging each day's absences and making follow up phone calls to parents each morning. Each year level recognises and actively promotes good attendance.

The school maintains strong links with the local community. The local service clubs support students in providing scholarships and helping to fund students with financial need into camps and excursions.

Professional development for staff is a high priority and staff recognise the need to be life long learners. Outside agencies provide development opportunities linked to teacher P& D plans and staff work closely with each other in sub-school groupings and Professional Learning Teams to further professional learning. Many staff are also involved in regional network groups which allow for sharing and collaboration of ideas.

In the spirit of a development culture, the school continues to strive for improvement in every aspect of college life. Our Annual Implementation Plan is action oriented and the goals and targets of this document are reflected in individual teacher's performance and development plans. We also focus on whole student development by embracing values and behaviour that will lead to the development of respectful, compassionate and connected young people.

As a school, we are always aiming for improvement in all aspects of school life so as to provide the best possible opportunities for all students. We have high expectations of our students and a belief that every student has the ability to learn.

We continue to monitor the provision of curriculum to students very closely, and are very conscious of providing a wide range of options to meet the needs of our students. This is particularly true in the post-compulsory years where breadth of choice is critical. We feel that we are very well placed to provide for our students into the future.

Mortlake College commits to a 'zero tolerance of child abuse'. Appropriate arrangements are in place to regulate the conduct and decisions of school staff for the benefit of our students. We support, encourage and enable staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse. We commit to ensuring the safety of children with a disability, ATSI and CALD backgrounds, students with diverse sexual and/or gender identifications and children who are vulnerable.

Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the school under any circumstances.

3.   Rights and responsibilities

3.1 Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

The rights and responsibilities in this policy are set out in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act 1995, The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and The Disability Standards for Education 2005. Details of these acts can be found in the appendix.

3.5 Bullying and harassment

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment free from bullying and harassment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others.

All members of the school community have an obligation to report instances of bullying and harassment.

All complaints will be taken seriously and confidentially.

Definitions of bullying and harassment can be found in the appendix.

Incidents of bullying and harassment will be dealt with in line with the school's staged response to behaviour management.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
Students have a right to:	Students have a responsibility to:
• Be treated fairly and given equal opportunity and access to all school activities.	• Be an appropriate role model for other students and to represent the school in a positive light at all times.
• Learn at the highest level and be encouraged to achieve their highest potential.	• Come to school every day.
	• Take advantage of the opportunities this school offers.
	• Have all the materials necessary for getting the work done.
• Feel safe at school	• Wear school uniform.
• Have access to a range of extra curricula activities	• Complete all required work.
• Have access to up to date facilities and equipment	• Use the school crossing.
	• Look after the school, the facilities and equipment.
• Be able to create positive	

relationships with teachers and other students across all year levels.	• Treat others with respect.
• Express an opinion and be listened to, even if that opinion differs from others.	• Listen and value other people's opinions. • Use commonsense and obey the school rule
• Expect that every effort will be taken to give them access to a wide range of subjects.	• Allow other students to work without distraction.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
Parents/carers have a right to	Parents/carers have a responsibility 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. • Be kept informed about their child's progress at school. • Participate in their child's education and learning.	• Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by modelling positive behaviours and supporting the school's curriculum, homework and uniform policies. • Support their child to be fully prepared for the demands of the school day. • Ensure their child's regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning by reading the school newsletter and school reports, attending parent teacher interviews and information sessions. • Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students by supporting the school's code of conduct and encouraging their children to be ethical and responsible citizens. • Are aware of the ways they can support the school; regular payment of fees, parents club, school council, working bees, classroom helpers, school sports, performing arts, etc. • To inform the school, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to their child that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities & Expectations
Teachers have a right to • Expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment • Be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student • Use discretion in the application of rules and consequences • Receive respect and support from the school community	Teachers have a responsibility to • Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy. • Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively. • Know the content they teach. Be confident and familiar with the VELS/ curriculum documents. • Know their students and develop positive relationships with a sense of mutual respect and partnership. • Give regular and timely feedback and plan and assess for effective learning. • Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. • Strive to keep abreast of best practice and use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning. • Follow restorative practice when dealing with student behaviour and provide a consistent approach to student management. • Communicate with others in a professional, friendly manner, valuing confidentiality, trust and honesty. • Respect school property and resources. • Acknowledge individuality and expect 'personal best'. • Ensure that all students progress.

4. Shared expectations

Mortlake College has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive in that they set out what are accepted and appropriate behaviours for our College community. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and families who come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.

At Mortlake College the rule is that every student has the right to learn and every teacher has the right to teach. Anything that interferes with that is against our school rule.

The school's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

Care and Compassion
Care for self and others

Integrity
Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensuring consistency between words and deeds

Doing Your Best
Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence

Respect
Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view, even if it differs from yours.

Fair Go
Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society

Responsibility
Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment

Freedom
Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion
Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity , be inclusive and including of others

Honesty and Trustworthiness
Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

Students and staff are called to high standards of personal behaviour and are challenged when these expectations are not met in a way that respects them as individuals and enables them to correct their behaviour and to make amends to those affected. Through developing empathy for others, students learn to become more positive, supportive and contributing members of their community.

Our approach to student behaviour management is primarily an educative one. That is, the fundamental aim of our behaviour management philosophy and practice is for students to learn to be responsible for themselves and their actions and to make genuine, positive contributions to their community.

5. SCHOOL ACTIONS and CONSEQUENCES

Typically a school tends to have a spread of support needs. A whole school approach shapes, supports and recognises appropriate behaviours in all students. In our school, approximately 80% to 85% of students will have little or no difficulties with the process of Restorative Practice. However, about 10 to 15% of students may need additional support and timely intervention on some occasions. For a variety of reasons, some 5% of students may not respond to these early efforts and may need more intensive support and/or flexible learning options to assist them to continue their learning.

The implementation of preventative and early intervention measures are part of the school's staged response to creating a positive school culture and managing challenging behaviours in students. Whilst these have already been outlined in *Section C – Whole School Prevention Statement*, specific examples of these techniques are outlined below in the Staged Response.

Mortlake College is a Restorative Practice school and the strategies of Restorative Practice will be used in the first instance for all student management issues.

A Restorative approach...
- *encourages students to appreciate the consequences of their actions for others*
- *enables students to make amends where their actions have harmed others*
- *requires students to be accountable for their actions*
- *encourages respect for all concerned*
- *develops empathy*

In the event that a student needs to be dealt with differently then the staged response leading to withdrawal, suspension or expulsion will be followed.

Staged Response

Stage 1: Prevention and Early Intervention

Suggested Strategies	School Actions
Recognise appropriate behaviour	• Find out what the student is good at • Provide opportunities for each student to demonstrate their strengths • Arrange celebration assemblies • Send out a special report to parents • Make a note in a diary • Highlight positive events in schools newsletters • Provide leadership opportunities • Fund scholarships • Give positive feedback • Give the student the right to represent the school. • Conduct awards nights
Establish consistent school wide processes to identify students at risk of disengagement from learning	• Liaise with kindergartens, primary schools and feeder schools when implementing Transition Programs • Introduce whole school approaches such as *Tribes, Restorative Practices.* • Establish a Wellbeing Team - Welfare Officer, Early Years Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator, Special Needs Teacher, Secondary School Nurse, Assistant Principal • Develop, promote, use and evaluate referrals to the Wellbeing Team • Engage Secondary Teacher's Assistant • Use the Student Attitude to School Survey to inform planning • Consult the *'Transfer of Student Information'* details provided by previous school
Establish consistent school-wide processes and programs for early intervention	• Ensure that students undertake effective transition programs • Utilize the expertise of the school's Wellbeing Staff • Review and utilize referrals to the Special Needs Coordinator • Conduct testing and determine funding levels for Programs for Students with a Disability (PSD) • Conduct Functional Assessments • Conduct Diagnostic Assessments • Utilise programs offered by and make appropriate referrals to Community Support Agencies • Reading Recovery • Develop a comprehensive Language Support Program e.g. train an Oral Language Educator (OLE) • Use specialist support for Literacy/Numeracy • Establish small group withdrawal programs based on identified needs e.g. Anger Management, Loss and Grief

Stage 2: Targeted Individual Response

Where direct intervention is needed as a targeted response for individual students, the following strategies will be considered:

Suggested Strategies	School Actions
Establish an understanding of the life circumstances of the child/young person	• Review previous school/year level files • Ask parent at Parent Teacher Interviews • Nominate an identified adult (Homeroom Teacher, Year Level Co-ordinator) to explicitly get to know the student • Have teachers develop a positive relationship with all students and parents, one based on mutual respect • Talk to the student and referring them to the shared expectations • Discuss appropriate behaviours in the classroom • Contact parents
Establish data collection strategies	• Continually refer to school roll/detention records to determine patterns • Survey students on specific issues • Conduct playground surveys each term • Consult Student Mapping Tool • Classroom circles
Establish a Student Support Group	• Introduce a Student Support Group (SSG) sooner rather than later i.e. once direct intervention is being considered • Determine SSG frequency on a needs basis • Develop and follow comprehensive plans • Ensure that all relevant staff have plans communicated to them • Modify teaching/learning practices based on an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
Develop a plan for improvement based on data, and review regularly	• Use Individual Learning Plan, Individual Behaviour Plan, Return to School Plan • Develop a Professional Learning Team based on the Attitudes to School Survey, Parent Opinion Survey, Staff Opinion Survey, Student Mapping Tool, Attendance and Retention Data
Explicitly teach and/or build replacement behaviours	• Overtly teach Interpersonal Skills Curriculum • Modify curriculum according to the data gained through the testing process • Frame inappropriate behaviour as a skill to be learnt and teach it explicitly
Determine strategies for monitoring & measurement of student progress	• Introduce an Assessment Schedule Cycle • On Demand testing • Moderation of student work • Review NAPLAN • Review past assessments conducted by the current or previous schools and SSSO staff • Collect local data e.g. yard incidents • Record Restorative Conferences

Establish inclusive and consistent classroom strategies	• Use the language of Growth Mindset and Tribes within the classroom • Have teachers name and teach to a student's strength • Ask the student to undertake tasks designed to better equip him/her to behave positively in the future • Make changes to the student's learning program to better equip him/her to behave positively • Have teachers reflect on their own practices as part of their professional practice • Provide non-competitive recess and lunchtime activities • Employ Education Support Officers • Provide and establish Peer Mentoring/ support
Establish out of class support strategies	• Engage SSSO staff • Utilize School Nurse • Involve Welfare Officer • Utilize Early Year's Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator • Use Wellbeing Team expertise • Provide cooling off space • Provide flexible options identified in Individual Learning Plans • Provide special, tailored withdrawal programs for students with particular needs. • Provide access to extra curricula activities of interest
Seek external advice and consultation	• Seek and use the advice of the Student Support Services Offices staff (SSSO) • Refer to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) • Undertake whole school professional development that relates to issues being managed • Contact Community Service Organisations for individual support • Contact Regional Office staff for advice
Establish consistent approaches to managing more challenging behaviours	• Conduct a group Restorative Conference or refer student to a facilitated Community Conference. • Withdraw a student from an activity or class for a short time • Give detention for serious and/or continual misconduct after parents/carers have received notification. • Suspension & Expulsion: For serious disciplinary measures follow DEECD *Engaging Schools are Effective Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines 2009* developed in response to Ministerial Order No.184

6. Supporting Documents

Mortlake College Engagement Policy is supported by a variety of school based policies including:

- Strategic Plan
- Annual Implementation Plan
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Sunsmart Policy
- Responsible use of Electronic Device Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Acceptable use of Internet Policy
- Restorative Practice Guidelines
- Work Safe Policy
- You Can Do It Program
- Uniform Policy

These policies are available upon request from the school.

Mortlake College undertakes to communicate school policies and procedures on the care, safety and welfare of students to staff, students and the school community via the following:

- Staff meetings
- School assembly / House meetings
- School website
- School newsletter
- School Council meetings

7. References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf