



Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Help for non-English speakers



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Mount Clear College on 03 5330 1500 or mount.clear.sc@education.vic.gov.au

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.

Mount Clear College is committed to providing a calm, positive safe and inclusive 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.

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Policy

1. School profile

Our College provides access to secondary education at the highest level for Ballarat and surrounding areas. The College is set in an attractive bush setting that boasts extensive facilities to deliver a comprehensive curriculum.

At Mount Clear College we are renowned for, and proud of our ability to maintain the friendly, caring approach of a small school, despite our student numbers being over 1000. We have teams in place that allow us to pay close attention to the individual yet are large enough to offer a diverse range of pathways, programs and facilities. Our curriculum and teaching strategies are aimed at providing students with a positive, confident attitude to learning, to assist them in identifying choices available in achieving the pathway to their preferred future.

We have an extensive 'Student Well-being' structure throughout the school and our staff apply a restorative approach daily. This involves maintaining a focus on building positive relationships and establishing a supportive environment that is fair and consistent.

This enables us to effectively monitor and support students at all levels of the college regarding their individual and collective welfare needs.

We endeavour to ensure that all students have a happy and successful time at Mount Clear College, whilst learning the value and reward of striving for individual excellence.

2. School values, philosophy, and vision

Mount Clear College's Vision is to be widely recognized as providing outstanding opportunities and pathways that inspire individual excellence.

Our college Values affirm the values of society and in doing so we:

- **CARE:** fostering relationships with our families, our community and globally.
- Show **COMMITMENT** to learning and the pursuit of individual growth.
- **RESPECT:** ourselves, each other and our environment.
- Take **RESPONSIBILITY** for the impact of our actions on ourselves and others.

Our school's vision is to develop the learning capacities of all students, enabling them to be:

- motivated, confident learners, who are persistent in striving for individual growth.
- resilient learners who will work with others to overcome challenges.
- students who demonstrate respect, compassion, honesty, acceptance of others and who value diversity.
- socially responsible students/citizens who contribute positively to the local and global community.
- successful in their transition through schooling to their desired future.

Mount Clear College is committed to providing a calm, positive, safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive, inclusive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student engagement and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked.

3. Engagement strategies

Mount Clear 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.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below.

Universal

- High and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- Prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing.
- Creating a calm, positive, safe, and inclusive learning culture.
- Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning

- Analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students can choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations.
- Teachers at Mount Clear College use “AVID” 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 Clear 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.
- Encourage student voice by providing multiple opportunities such as weekly leadership meetings and focus groups for the students to take responsibility and be involved in decision making. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- Create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and mentor vertical activities.
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the SHAAC team, teachers, Year Level Coordinators, 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
 - Restorative conversations
 - Peer mentoring programs
 - Safe Schools
- Programs developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. friendship group)
- Opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

Targeted

- Year 7-10 students have two Year Level Coordinators per year level and year 11 and 12 have one Year Level Coordinator per year level. The Year Level Coordinators monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year level, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support.
- All students are 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 are referred to the SHAAC team for educational and personal needs assessment.

- Mount Clear College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan
- Each year the SHAAC team in consultation with the relevant Assistant Principal and Leading Teacher undertakes health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers and other school staff.
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Individual

Mount Clear 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.
- the Assistant Principal and / or the schools Engagement Officer meets with the 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.
 - SHAAC team
 - appropriate external supports such as alternative education settings, Hands-on Learning, youth and family services, other allied health professionals, Headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
 - re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student.
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family.
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Mount Clear College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally, and socially. The SHAAC team, Teachers, Year Level Coordinators Inclusion staff, Leading Teachers and the Assistant Principals play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Mount Clear 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
- safety management plans
- protocol for mandatory reporting

The school utilises relevant external student wellbeing support services to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- Psychologist for psychological and academic assessment
- Mentors – providing support for ‘at risk’ children
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- Social workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs
- Youth agencies
- local parent support groups
- relevant DEECD support staff
- C.A.S.A. [Centre Against Sexual Assault]
- School Focused Youth Service

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.
- receive reasonable assistance to resolve school-related problems.
- receive on-going communication and feedback about their progress.

Students have the responsibility to:

- attend school regularly and 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.
- take responsibility for their behaviour and learning.
- care for the school environment

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

As a school community, we have a shared commitment to creating and maintain a safe, positive calm and inclusive environment that ensures all students can engage effectively in their education. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Mount Clear Colleges Bullying Prevention Policy.

As a high priority, we have developed a core set of school values with the school community. We bring our school values to life through our behaviours and interactions with each other:

- attending school on time and arriving promptly to each lesson
- preparing properly for school and for each lesson
- meeting appearance, dress and uniform standards
- moving safely through the school environment
- participating fully in learning activities
- attentively following instructions
- listening to each other
- treating each other with respect, courtesy, and fairness
- valuing the individual strengths and differences of others
- inclusive learning practices
- demonstrating and monitoring our own learning progress
- attempting learning tasks to the best of our ability
- making appropriate choices, even without supervision

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Mount Clear 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 from class if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class. When ongoing parents or cares will be informed of such withdrawals.
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Coordinator
- restorative practices
- catch up time.
- 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

Mount Clear 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

Mount Clear 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

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- A link to the policy is included in the staff handbook provided to staff during induction
- Policy updates are discussed at staff meetings/briefings and advised on the Bulletin
- Made available publicly on our school website <https://mountclearcollege.vic.edu.au/policies-and-documents>
- A link to all school policies is included in transition and enrolment packs
- Students and families will be notified of updates via Compass
- School Council
- Included as annual reference in the school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Review Cycle and Evaluation

Version Date	7 July 2021
Policy Date	July 2021
School Council Approval Date	School Council Circulating Resolution, meeting August 2021
Person Responsible	Assistant Principal
Next Review Date	July 2023