

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY

## **Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Roberts McCubbin Primary School via email [roberts.mccubbin.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:roberts.mccubbin.ps@education.vic.gov.au) or phone 9890 2372.



## 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

Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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, where student participation is encouraged and valued, 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. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
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## POLICY

### 1. School Profile

Roberts McCubbin Primary School is located in Box Hill South and was established in 1994. The school is committed to maintaining a culture of continuous improvement in all areas of teaching and learning. We have high expectations for all students with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Our integrated inquiry-based curriculum aims to engage the children, develop a love of learning and achieve success within our class structures. The specialist programs we offer are Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Music, Physical Education, STEAM, Library and LOTE (Japanese). Our modern facilities with larger, flexible teaching spaces that allow the implementation of more effective and innovative teaching and learning. This is supported by all classrooms being equipped with interactive technologies which are used as key teaching tools. We support and develop positive, meaningful partnerships with parents and the wider community and have a high level of parent participation.

At Roberts McCubbin Primary School we are also committed to creating a school which has a shared understanding and language about learning. We believe it is essential that there is a continuing dialogue about teaching and learning in a community that is rich in reflection and collaboration. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community. We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

### 2. School Values, Philosophy and Vision

At Roberts McCubbin Primary School we believe that every child is unique and can succeed. All children need to feel safe and happy at school and can reach their full potential. Learning is greatly enhanced when children:

- are supported by developmentally appropriate practice, matching their learning needs to their individual rate of development
- are actively engaged in a variety of learning experiences
- develop a positive self-esteem by experiencing success and knowing that their efforts are valued
- are encouraged to solve problems and be comfortable 'risk takers'
- learn in a stimulating, attractive and supportive environment, where parent involvement is encouraged and celebrated
- are exposed to a variety of learning styles
- work in cooperation and respect the rights of others

Roberts McCubbin Primary School's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* and our *Safe & Happy Book* are 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 values of creativity and endeavour, respect, inclusion and resilience at every opportunity.

#### **Respectful Relationships**

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will show commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships is essential in creating a supportive environment to prevent violence against others. Commitment to these values, will be demonstrated by staff and students alike, and is essential for supporting the development and maintenance

of school structures, policies and procedures that promote equality and respect.

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 and School Philosophy Policy* is available online at <https://robmacps.vic.edu.au/policies-documents/>

### 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement and an inclusive and safe environment through our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) program, Respectful Relationships (4R's) curriculum and Wellbeing supports, for all students in our school.

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

#### Universal

Whole school strategies that promote positive behaviour and inclusion:

- Roberts McCubbin Primary School's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy* and our *Safe & Happy Book* 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
- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- 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 Participation Survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- delivering a broad curriculum to ensure that students are exposed to subjects and programs that will help grow their interests, strengths and aspirations
- using the RMPS Instructional Model to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction, including using the High Impact Teaching Strategies to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- adopting 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
- carefully planned transition programs are in place to support students moving into different areas of the school and into Year 7
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the

classroom, formally in school assemblies and communicated 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 Junior School Councillors and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- creating opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through multi-aging class groupings, bi-annual school production, athletics carnival, peer support and buddy programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, First Aide Officer, 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
- Teachers at Roberts McCubbin Primary School use School Wide Positive Behaviour instructional 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
- We engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our students, which includes programs such as: Social Skills/Wellbeing programs which focus on, emotional intelligence, body safety, mindfulness, social supports and responding to situations with resilience.
- Engaging in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - o Restorative Practices
  - o *Safe & Happy Book*
  - o Respectful Relationships
  - o BeYou
  - o Better Buddies
  - o Purple Peer Support Buddies
  - o Berry St Trauma Informed Practice
  - o Bully Stoppers
  - o School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- Opportunities for student inclusion
- Leadership opportunities- Junior School Councillors, Eco-Captains, Student Voice Team, Purple Peer Support.
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment

### Targeted

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will use coordinated early intervention and prevention strategies to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support. The school will provide the following support structures:

- Monitoring of, and responding to student absences
- Management & Behaviour Plans for students in need
- Protocols & procedures for mandatory reporting

- Student Support Groups for children in need
- each year group has a Year Group Leader, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our *Student Safe and Happy Book* and *Parent Safe and Happy Book* for further information
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through: recognition and celebration of a range of special cultural events, celebration of Harmony Day, Multicultural Student Captains promoting the recognition of culturally diverse perspectives and inviting students to greet our community at assembly in their first language, translation of school documents and provision of interpreters when required, using cultural diverse texts with students and providing access to these texts through our library, ensuring diverse cultures are represented on student voice teams, displaying welcome signs in a range of languages and encouraging parents to communicate with their child in the language they know best
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through referrals to Foundation House and other support services where necessary including financial support, providing access to low cost second hand uniform, provide peer support students that can support the integration into the classroom, yard and learning environment
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- wellbeing and health staff 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 through the Berry Street Education Model
- students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)

### Individual

Where possible, we encourage staff to use the strategies, which can include links to

information on the [Department's Policy and Advisory Library](#) such as:

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plans
- Behaviour - Students
- Behaviour Support Plans
- Student Support Services

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental health toolkit](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Navigator](#)
- [LOOKOUT](#)

Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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:
  - o school-based wellbeing supports
  - o Student Support Services
  - o Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Orange Door

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
- engaging with our regional Koorie Education Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  - o with a disability
  - o in Out of Home Care
  - o with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will utilise relevant external wellbeing support services in order to identify and address the barriers to learning that individual

students may be facing. Such services to provide support for students and staff include:

- DET psychologist & speech therapist for psychological and academic assessment
- OnPsych (psychological) services
- Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- ES staff to support social skills groups and strategies for students
- Relevant DET support staff

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

Roberts McCubbin Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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 and School Philosophy Policy* 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, racism, 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our *Complaints Policy*.

## **6. Student behavioural expectations and management**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy* and *Safe & Happy Book*. Restorative Practices are implemented as a whole school approach at Roberts McCubbin Primary School to positively support student behaviour.

*Bullying and harassment* - Roberts McCubbin Primary School provides a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and all students have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in the school environment. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with the School's *Bullying Prevention Policy* and *Safe & Happy Book*. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about inappropriate behaviour and consequences to be put in place by teachers and other school staff. This will be supported by our School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework through the whole Major and Minor flowcharts.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our *Bullying Prevention Policy* (<https://robmacps.vic.edu.au/policies-documents/>).

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Roberts McCubbin Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

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
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion



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

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Roberts McCubbin Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

**Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.**

## **7. Engaging with families**

Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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**

Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy (<https://robmacps.vic.edu.au/policies-documents/>):

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	2024
Consultation	Shared with School Council and Education Committee
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2026