



Adopted by College Council
Date: Prior to 2016
Last Review: February 2020

WELFARE and STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Rationale

Because Melton Christian College seeks to follow the teachings of Christ, concern for individual and communal welfare is fundamental to College practices.

All Christians are called to obey two commands above all others, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” And the second is “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22, 37-39). Therefore all those involved in governance, or employed at the College, as well as volunteers and students are expected to implement this Welfare and Student Engagement Policy.

Melton Christian College provides students with a Christ-centred education. The task of the College includes nurturing students emotionally, spiritually, socially and physically.

Policy

Within the appropriate limitations of their roles, and to the extent that it is reasonable and practical, all staff at Melton Christian College are expected to monitor, and contribute to the welfare of students and others, particularly students who are in their direct care.

Child Safe Culture

All staff have delegated responsibility from the Principal, as do the governing authority of the College to:

- Work towards embedding an organisational culture of child safety
- Be familiar with and promote familiarity with the College child safe policy
- Be familiar with and promote familiarity with the VIT Code of Conduct, and the additional points that establish the College’s expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Take part in screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Be familiar with and promote familiarity with processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Always work to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Always work towards appropriate participation and empowerment of children.

Homerooms

This is a key aspect of our approach to student welfare and is centred on daily timetabled meetings in year level sub-groups.

Class Capacity

The upper limit on student numbers in classes is determined by College Council in consultation with the Principal. As a standard, capacity is considered reached at 26 students. At the time of the most recent review of this policy, the upper limit is set at 26 students per class. It is appropriate for the Principal to propose temporary, short-term changes to the upper limit, and College Council will decide these proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Pastoral Care

At MCC Pastoral Care includes the following practices:

- Encouraging the Christ-centred spiritual development of students individually and as a group
- Empowering Class-teachers and Homeroom teachers in their role as pastoral carers and Biblical instructors

- Aligning the College's Core Values and their implementation with the Bible teaching program throughout the College
- Aligning the College's Core Values and their implementation with the Personal Development programs and Student Leadership programs
- Aligning the College's Core Values and their implementation with the Chapel program
- Implementing the College's Core Values throughout every aspect and program as we seek Christ-like selflessness within the staff and student body
- Assigning staff to work with Homeroom teachers in helping students to deal with difficult issues
- Providing support, counselling and or referrals to appropriate services to students as needed

Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment

Responding to Bullying and Harassment (including sexual harassment) is a key aspect of our approach to student and staff welfare and is described in separate Bullying and Harassment Policies, one specific to students, the other specific to staff.

Unlawful Discrimination

Consistent with our Vision and Values, Melton Christian College will endeavor not to discriminate unlawfully against any member of the College or wider community.

Child Safety

Responding to suspected child abuse (including neglect) is a key aspect of our approach to student welfare and is described in a separate Child Safe Policy accessible on the College website or direct from the College office anytime.

Written/Visual communication

It is reasonable that Melton Christian College protects its reputation and image by determining and retaining control over the suitability of written and visual communications.

The school name, motto, logo, uniform and words or visuals of staff or students must not be used without permission and in any way which would result in a negative impact for the school and its community.

Use of ICT and Digital Communication

The College has a comprehensive and clear statement of what constitutes acceptable and appropriate electronic communication behaviour. The College ICT Protocols are accessible within the annually updated Handbook, accessible on the College website. The ICT Protocols – the MCC way, explains the benefits and consequences of compliance and non-compliance with the protocols.

Suggestions for students (and their parents) in managing computer and phone abuse:

- A student should not reply/react/respond to any inappropriate communication, they should tell their parent, and then notify their Homeroom Teacher
- Students should report any further inappropriate communication to their parent and again notify their Teacher and Year Level Coordinator
- Students should retain screenshots or other authentic evidence of inappropriate comments to assist with tracking down the perpetrator
- Students should keep in mind that sometimes cyber bullying becomes a matter for the police
- Students are likely to find this situation distressing, and MCC provides support through: Head of Pastoral Care, Homeroom Teacher, Coordinator, other programs such as Strength and Shine.

MCC Response to Breaches of Implementing this Policy

This policy states that within the appropriate limitations of their roles, and to the extent that it is reasonable and practical, all staff at Melton Christian College are expected to monitor, and contribute to the welfare of students and others, particularly students who are in their direct care.

Therefore, behaviour which jeopardises the safety or wellbeing of others, physically or emotionally, should be immediately reported in the following order of accountability:

Teaching	Non-Teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Homeroom Teacher, Classroom Teacher, Subject Teacher • Coordinator: Year-Level Coordinator, Faculty Team Leader, Curriculum Advisor, Education Support Coordinator • Departmental Head: Head of Primary, Head of Secondary, Head of Teaching and Learning • Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line Manager, eg: Office Manager, ICT Manager • Business Manager • Principal

If the breach of policy relates to behaviour by the Principal, it may become appropriate that the College Council Chairperson be approached for guidance and a response.

In situations where a student’s destructive behaviour is critical and/or ongoing, Head of Pastoral Care may also be called upon to work with the student and their family. Suspension or expulsion may be required/justified simply for the safety of others. If all avenues for restoration are exhausted, and expulsion is the right and only option, then counselling should still be provided so that even the expulsion is a constructive, albeit terminal event for the departing student and the good reputation of the College remains intact.

Student Code of Conduct

The student Code of Conduct is contained within the annually updated Handbook and should be accessed through the website. It is the reasonable expectation of MCC that students who choose to accept an enrolment place will always conform to the fair requirements of the Code of Conduct.

Parent Code of Conduct

MCC has a Parent Code of Conduct which forms part of the enrolment application documentation, it is accessible on the website. Parents who accept a place for their children are thereby agreeing to abide by the Parent Code of Conduct.

Student wellbeing - relationships

The College Handbook (accessible on the website) explains that the MCC practice is that in line with our core values of Respect and Community, our goal is to see peace, kindness, consideration, joy and forgiveness demonstrated in friendly and supportive relationships between College students. Inclusive friendliness is encouraged and exclusiveness/cliques among students are discouraged. Students are expected to empower and support each other in all areas of College life building positive relationships for all. Romantic relationships and demonstrations of romantic affection are not permitted at school because these behaviours isolate students, and invariably distract students from their learning. Sexual activity of any kind is not permitted at school or school events.

Student wellbeing - support

Student wellbeing and support is a high priority at MCC and begins with each student’s homeroom or class teachers. These homeroom or class teachers are the first point of contact concerning pastoral care. Year Level Coordinators can further assist students with academic or emotional issues. Our Head of Pastoral Care is also available by referral or request as a resource person to assist with concerns.

Whole-School Engagement with MCC Core Values

The five Core Values are included in full on the College website. They are simplified for everyday use as follows:

1. Christ-centredness
2. Excellence
3. Respect
4. Community
5. Passion for Teaching and Learning

Engagement through Curriculum

MCC implements a Christ-centred Curriculum with the intention of engaging all students and challenging them to achieve their full academic potential. The richer and deeper intention is that through the curriculum, students are encouraged to discover their God-given gifts and calling.

House System

MCC House Teams are such that families are affiliated to one of four Houses: Daniel, Caleb, Gideon or Joshua. The House system facilitates internal competitive and cultural events, as well as creating a sense of belonging and identity for students.

Because House membership is by family, and siblings are consequently within the same House Team, Class-teachers and Homeroom Teachers are able to build ongoing relationships with the families within our College community. Students remain members of their House for the duration of their schooling, P-12.

Student Wellbeing Staffer

The Head of Pastoral Care (HoPC) has a significant role in developing and implementing strategies, practices and programs to enhance student wellbeing. The HoPC also helps identify significant issues in the school community and works with relevant staff teams to develop a school culture where all students are valued, accepted and able to develop their potential for learning.

The HoPC is the first point of resourcing Homeroom teachers to equip them to assist students in need. In cases of critical need, the HoPC , provides counselling and guidance directly to students. Students may refer themselves, or be referred by a friend, a teacher or parent, and the HoPC uses discretion and may refer students as appropriate to external agencies.

Engagement through Inclusion

In relation to inclusion of students with special needs, MCC has the policy that if reasonable adjustments are necessary to enable an enrolled child to participate at the College, the College will make those adjustments to the extent that they do not involve unjustifiable hardship.

It is the general aim of the College that to the extent that it is reasonably possible:

- students are able to develop their potential to the greatest extent possible
- inclusive special education techniques are implemented
- that children's time away from mainstream lessons is minimal, or is optimal on a case by case basis
- that our teachers understand that in a learning community they all are required to be teachers of children with special needs

Safety: a Right and a Responsibility

It is important that all members of MCC Christian learning community feel safe and secure at school. Therefore, while all members of our school community have the right to a safe and secure learning environment, they equally have a responsibility to contribute actively to such an environment.

Participation: a Right and a Responsibility

MCC students will participate fully in the educational program and attend all scheduled classes. MCC students exhibit constructive, pro-social behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. MCC students demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, and they contribute to effective educational immersion for themselves and other students.

Moreover, as students progress through the year levels they are to take greater responsibility for their own learning. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and behaviour.

Student Behaviour - Belonging: a Right and a Responsibility

The College makes comprehensive and clear statements of what constitutes acceptable and appropriate behaviour by students. The Student Code of Conduct is one element of that statement. Other, extensive explanations are in the Handbook which is updated annually, and is accessible on the College website.

Students have the right to belong within the College community. They also have the responsibility to behave in ways that allow others to belong fully too.

Student Attendance

The College insists that students P-12 attend all scheduled schooldays and all timetabled classes or other events during those days further details are in the Handbook, accessed via the website.

The class roll is marked by the classroom teacher electronically. If a student is absent from school without prior explanation an auto-SMS message will be sent to the parent. Parents and guardians are to phone, send a note, or provide a medical certificate to account for student absences. Staff will investigate unexplained absences. Further information is in the Handbook, accessible via the website.