

STATEMENT OF VALUES AND SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the values of our school community and explain the vision and objectives of our school.

Policy:

Merri Creek Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Merri Creek Primary School support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

This policy outlines our school's vision, objective, values and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our staff induction handbook, and enrolment/transition packs.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we:

- display our vision and promote your values in our school
- celebrate our values in our school newsletter
- discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies.

Vision:

Merri Creek Primary School's vision is to *create an environment where students thrive in every way. We support each other as we discover, learn, think and question. Respecting ourselves and others, we all contribute to our community and the wider world.*

Objective:

That all students are:

- Optimistic about their future and be resilient in times of challenge
- Engaged learners
- Creative and enterprising thinkers who can approach problems in innovative ways with increasing independence
- Curious and inspired by the process of discovery
- Able to understand their self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that allows them to manage their social and emotional wellbeing
- Active and informed citizens working towards the common good of society
Able to employ technologies in learning and respond to the changing ways society shares, uses, develops and processes information and technology
- Protected with child safety measures ensured by MCPS policies and processes.

School Values:

Merri Creek Primary School values are *C.A.R.E.*

Creativity

Within the school community, this reflects:

- Valuing ideas from parents, children, staff and the wider community
- Being open to suggestions and ideas
- Valuing the creative and aesthetic skills and ideas of all members of the community.

Within the classroom, this reflects:

- Providing opportunities for children to explore some of their own ideas and visions
- Empowering children to contribute to salutations, strategies and ideas about their learning environment
- Embracing natural as well as constructed aspects of the environment
- Rich and deep experiences that promote creative and lateral thinking and experiences as part of learning and promoting strong identity and sense of self in each child.

Acceptance

Within the school community, this reflects:

- A commitment to social justice
- An acknowledgement of diversity
- Respecting differences
- Embracing of all cultures
- Inclusion of children with additional or special needs.

Within the classroom, this reflects:

- Opportunities for different experiences and individualized experiences in learning
- Awareness and acceptance of different learning styles, personalities and values of each child and family
- Affirmation of differences between children rather than expecting a “norm”.

Responsibility

Within the school community this reflects:

- Being helpful to all members of the community
- Reflecting citizenship duty
- Being reliable, transparent and honest
- Fulfilling legal and moral requirements
- Reflecting individual and group responsibility.

Within the classroom this reflects:

- Shared understandings of expectations
- Reliable and predictable routines and expectations
- Clarity of roles and empowerment to fulfil expectations
- Participation by students in the decision making process.
- Consequences and procedures that enact and promote responsible behaviours.

Effort

Within the school community this reflects:

- Aiming to achieve best outcomes for children in relation to academic as well as student well being
- Reflecting upon and building a strong future for the school community
- Being strong advocates for children, families and education.

Within the classroom this reflects:

- Providing opportunities for children to reach their potential
- Providing learning experiences that support and challenge children in their endeavours
- Empowering children to strive and work to their capabilities

- To emphasize attempts as well as achievements.

Behavioural Expectations:

Merri Creek Primary School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

Staff have a range of expectations around behaviour and must follow our school and Department policies and the Victorian Public Service Code of Conduct and Values. Teaching staff also adhere to the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

Students are supported by school staff to meet expected standards of behaviour as outlined in our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy.

Information about the expectations on parents and carers to ensure schools remain respectful and inclusive places is outlined in the Department's Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy and our Respect for School Staff Policy.

As principals and school leaders, we will:

- model positive behaviour and effective leadership
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe behaviour is expected of everyone
- behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide safe and inclusive environments
- plan, implement and review our work to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students at school
- identify and support students who are or may be at risk
- do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential
- work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- respond appropriately when safe and inclusive behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
- inform parents of the school's communication and complaints procedures.

As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

- model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- proactively engage with parents about student outcomes
- work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs
- communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents
- treat all members of the school community with respect.

As parents and carers, we will:

- model positive behaviour to our child
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- take an interest in our child's school and learning
- work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child
- communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns
- support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students
- follow the school's processes for communication with staff and making complaints
- treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

As students, we will:

- model positive behaviour to other students
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community.
- comply with and model school values and respect school rights
- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
- actively participate in school
- not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

As community members, we will:

- model positive behaviour to the school community
- treat other members of the school community with respect
- support school staff to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
- utilise the school's processes for communication with staff and submitting complaints.

Unreasonable Behaviours:

Schools are not public places, and the Principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds (for more information, see our *Visitors Policy*).

Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students or members of our school community will not be tolerated at school, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- being violent or threatening violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person's personal space
- speaking or behaving in a rude, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via email, social media, or over the phone
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- discriminatory or derogatory comments
- racial vilification
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences by the school Principal.

At the Principal's discretion, unreasonable behaviour may be managed by:

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
- implementing specific communication protocols
- written warnings
- conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
- exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
- reports to Victoria Police
- legal action.

Inappropriate student behaviour will be managed in accordance with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* ensures that everyone in our school community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create a school that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

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 staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

Related Policies and Resources

Department of Education and Training policies and resources:

- [Work-Related Violence in Schools Policy](#)
- [Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy](#)

Merri Creek Primary School related policies:

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Complaints Policy

Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	August 2024
Approved by	School Council 14th August 2024
Next scheduled review date	August 2027