

Murrayville Community College Student Code of Conduct Policy

Rationale

This document is designed to present specific guidelines for student behavioural expectations at Murrayville Community College. It should be read in conjunction with the policies relating to Student Welfare, Learning Technology, Uniform, Bullying and Harassment, as well as the The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct (available in the policy section of the college website).

At Murrayville Community College we give priority to enhancing self-discipline and respect for the rights of others. We seek to promote an environment which maximises the opportunity of all students to strive for excellence. The rights and responsibilities of students, parents and school staff are recognised at all times.

Aims

The principles which must underlie this Code of Conduct are:

- All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect
- Students have a right to work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying or harassment, they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambitions
- Parents have a right 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
- Teachers have a right to expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment
- Parents have an obligation to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Principal and staff have an obligation to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Code of Conduct

Implementation

1. Relationships

The quality of relationships is crucial to successful learning. At Murrayville Community College all members of the school community are expected to foster harmonious interpersonal relationships by:

- Being courteous and considerate to others at all times
- Cooperating and complying with reasonable requests from others – students, staff and other authorised people
- Positively contributing to the culture of the school through cooperative actions, understanding, tolerance and empathy
- Communicating with students, staff and visitors in a respectful manner, using polite language and tone
- Keeping our school community free from harassment, aggression and violence – all forms of harassment (sexual, verbal, racial, physical, intellectual) are totally unacceptable

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2. Learning and Attendance

Students need to demonstrate their intention to learn through attitude and approach to their studies by:

- Accepting responsibility for their own learning and seeking help when needed
- Arriving at lessons on time, with all materials and equipment
- Working efficiently in the classroom and completing set work punctually
- Seeking out teachers for missed work after absence
- Respecting the rights of other students to learn and teachers to teach
- Using their school diary effectively
- Completing set homework punctually
- Using computers responsibly for learning purposes and abiding by the Learning Technology Policy and Internet Users Agreement
- Attending school regularly and punctually
- Signing in and out at the front office when required
- Providing a note of explanation from parent/carer for lateness and absences, at the time of return to school
- Reporting to the front office if arriving late, to sign the Student Late book

3. Environment

Students are expected to be environmentally responsible by respecting the school environment and seeking to improve it through:

- Respecting property belonging to themselves, others, or the school, including all teaching and learning materials and resources
- Conserving energy, materials and resources by switching off appliances when not in use
- Preventing all forms of pollution and property damage through caring for property and the environment, which includes –
 - littering
 - graffiti
 - vandalism
 - consumption of food or drink inside (at duty teacher's discretion)
 - chewing of chewing gum

4. Safety

All students have the right to learn in a safe, caring and orderly environment. Students are expected to accept responsibility for the safety of themselves and others at all times by:

- Following all safety regulations in each area of the school
- Becoming familiar with fire and emergency evacuation regulations and procedures and participating in regular fire/evacuation drill exercises
- Using all equipment in a responsible manner
- Avoiding and preventing violence and threats of violence, bullying and fighting
- Not possessing potentially dangerous items such as knives, guns, sling shots or any other potentially dangerous items
- Keeping personal possessions, including school books, in the allocated locker or space provided

5. Leaving the School Grounds

- No student may leave the school grounds without permission
- Bus travellers may not leave the school grounds during the school day unless parents/carers have sent a note to the school requesting the absence
- 'Town' students may only leave the grounds to go to their own home for lunch provided they have sought permission from the Principal
- Students may only be signed out of the school by school staff

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6. Student Cars

- Students driving their own cars to school are not permitted to carry other students as passengers unless they have signed approval from parents/carers to transport other students
- Student cars must be parked in the designated areas and all students are required to comply with the school's Traffic Management policy

7. Bus Travel

- Bus travellers are required to sign a behaviour agreement which clearly defines expectations which must be followed in order to ensure student safety
- Students travelling on buses are expected to behave in a safe and sensible manner
- Students must remain seated at all times
- Students must obey instructions from the driver and/or bus captain at all times
- All P-6 students must assemble in the designated areas and are not permitted to board buses until bus rolls are marked
- Students not travelling home on the usual bus must notify the front office or bus coordinator
- Students, other than those normally travelling, are permitted to travel on a school bus if there are seats available and their parent/carer has contacted the front office prior to travelling

8. Uniform

- All students are expected to wear correct school uniform (see College Uniform Policy)
- All students must present at school in a clean and hygienic manner

Sanctions

All staff are responsible for discipline management within their classes and in the yard. As a member of a team, each teacher should see themselves as the first and major link in the discipline management chain (refer to Discipline Procedures for Classroom Teachers).

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that the steps and sanctions outlined below are enforced consistently and fairly by everyone.

At Murrayville Community College we favour a restorative approach to behaviour management as the first step in resolving conflict.

Staff are encouraged to use the following questions when working with students to resolve conflict:

Restorative Questions

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought of since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you need to do to make this right?

The sanctions applied to violation of rules should be graded and consistent in nature. Sanctions should vary according to the age, previous (recent) history, seriousness of the breach, and take into account any student disability or impairment.

At Murrayville Community College it is important that students learn to recognise that all actions have consequences. Consequences are graded in severity, with an emphasis on students being accountable and learning to take responsibility for their behaviour. Care also needs to be taken that students' studies are not adversely affected by such disciplinary procedures.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in the State of Victoria and will never be carried out at Murrayville Community College.

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Sanctions include:

1. Community Services

Property damage that increases the workload of maintenance staff may attract a sanction that assists in decreasing that workload elsewhere eg picking up litter, sweeping, weeding, gardening.

2. Withdrawal from Class

When a child's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular class activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time. Examples of this include answering back to the teacher, refusing to engage in the work at hand or moving around the room inappropriately. The student who has been withdrawn is always supervised and should be given work with which to continue. They may be isolated to a VCE class where there are spare seats. Where appropriate, parents are informed of such withdrawals.

3. Detention to Complete Unfinished Classwork

MCC encourages students to complete all work set. This increases their chances of satisfactorily completing their subjects. Lack of effort or misbehaviour can result in a student not completing their work in the regular classroom. Teachers may require a student to finish school work during recess or lunch. If a student fails to arrive to complete the work then after school detention may be set. No more than half a recess or lunch is used for detention. Parents are informed at least the day before when students are required to undertake work after school.

4. Monitoring of Student Behaviour

Following unsatisfactory behaviour a teacher records the misbehaviour in the student's file. Form Teachers, Leading Teachers and the Principal will monitor behaviour and follow up where appropriate.

Student monitor sheets are used at times to monitor aspects of individual students. These are usually an outcome of discussions with parents. They can be weekly or daily. Each week teachers of the student enter comments on a sheet and this is delivered to the parents. A daily sheet is used when closer monitoring is needed. The teacher enters a comment at the end of the lesson and the sheet is checked at the end of the day

4. Withdrawal of a Privilege

Teachers are permitted to withdraw privileges from students as a logical consequence of breaches of classroom rules. Such withdrawals may include students not having the privilege of sitting where they choose or, because of a safety breach, being denied access to particular equipment. This can include withdrawal from camps, school socials and excursions.

School environment behaviour applies at school, on the way to or from school, while in school uniform, on camps, or while attending an official College function. For a full list of Murrayville Community College procedures please refer to the MCC Parent Handbook. Essentially the school environment behaviour rules are based on the rights and responsibilities of individuals and that:

- Noise level and language are appropriate
- Movement is safe and appropriate
- Personal, private and College property are respected
- Each individual is free from harassment

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If these school environment rights and responsibilities are ignored the teacher may initially give a warning. If the student chooses to ignore this warning then the appropriate sanctions that the teacher may use include:

1. Withdrawal from the area
This is usually for a set period of time, perhaps a week.
A repeated offence may incur withdrawal for the rest of the term.
2. Placement onto student monitoring sheets
These are the same as those used in class but with a different emphasis.
3. Withdrawal of a privilege
This can include withdrawal from camps, school socials and excursions.
4. Sent home
Serious misbehaviour on camps can result in the student being sent home at the parent's expense.

Serious cases may be referred to the Principal or delegate for more severe sanctions, such as suspension.

* What is harassment and bullying?

Harassment and bullying is any written, verbal, visual material or physical conduct which is unwelcome and/or offensive (refer to Bullying & Harassment Policy).

If the sanctions do not work : Student Support Group Meetings

(see Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance 2014)

In addition to rules and a graded list of sanctions, Murrayville Community College uses both formal and informal meetings when a student's behaviour does not comply with the Code of Conduct. As mentioned earlier (Monitoring of student behaviour), MCC closely monitors the student population. When a student does not respond to teacher requests or engages in unsatisfactory behaviour, informal meetings or support groups may be convened by schools at the request of teacher or parents to facilitate solutions to behavioural problems or difficulties of students. In general, discipline meetings attempt to define the issues, set goals and determine strategies, tasks and responsibilities associated with these goals.

Murrayville Community College ensures that the outcomes of each meeting, especially expectations and requirements, are clearly understood by all involved. Appropriate documentation is kept and includes a list of participants and agreed outcomes to assist future problem-solving processes. These statements are verified by the parents and/or students and remain confidential.

Suspension

Suspension is the process of excluding a student from the standard instruction or educational opportunities being provided to other students at the school for part of a day, a full day, or multiple days. Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and is best reserved for incidents when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response.

Suspensions may be served in school or out of school.

In order for suspension to be an option, the following conditions must be in place:

The student's behaviour must have occurred:

- Whilst attending school
- Travelling to or from school
- While engaged in any school activity away from the school *or*
- While travelling to or from any school activity

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The student's behaviour must meet one or more of the following conditions:

- a) Behaves in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
- b) Causes significant damage to or destruction of property;
- c) Commits or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;
- d) Possesses, uses or sells or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;
- e) Fails to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
- f) Consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parent/carer status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sex; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes;
- g) Consistently behaves in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.

Please note:

For incidents between students that occur outside of school hours or in locations other than those listed above, a suspension cannot be used as a response. The impact of cyberbullying (and other behaviours) outside of school hours/off school premises on schools is acknowledged, however, if the behaviour occurs solely outside of school hours/grounds suspension is not an available recourse. If incidents outside of school hours are connected to behaviour that does meet the grounds and location requirements for suspension, this external behaviour may be considered when determining the response to an in-school incident.

Evaluation

When First Approved : 18th August 2014

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