

Safe Environment Policy



Help for non-English Speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Miners Rest Primary School on 03 5334 6328 or miners.rest.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

Background

Schools should be a safe place for everyone including students, staff, families, and members of the local community. The involvement and commitment of the whole school community is required to achieve a culture in which safe and respectful schools are everyone's concern and responsibility.

It is essential that all schools promote and provide a supportive learning community where all students feel, and are, safe. Students have a fundamental right to learn in a safe, supportive environment and to be treated with respect. School staff also have the right to teach, work and participate in an environment that is safe and supportive. Similarly, parents and other local community members have a right to feel safe, supported and respected in the school context.¹

Purpose

Leadership and staff acknowledge the importance of an environment that contributes positively to the health and wellbeing of all staff and students.

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- providing a safe, inclusive, and empowering school environment for students, families, staff and visitors
- delivering safety education in ICT and Respectful Relationships as a part of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing
- ensuring families, students and staff are key partners in promoting a safe environment.

As a health promoting school, we will promote the safety and wellbeing of children, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships.

Policy Statement

Whole school engagement

¹ Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs 2011 National Safe Schools Framework http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/NSSFramework.pdf



It is recognised that every member of Miners Rest Primary School has an impact on students' health and can contribute to creating a safe environment. All members of our school community including staff, students, families, and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

Definitions

Bullying: Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.²

The different types of bullying include:

Verbal or written abuse - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters

Violence - including threats of violence

Sexual harassment - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation

Homophobia and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality

Discrimination including racial discrimination - treating people differently because of their identity

Cyber bullying - either online or via mobile phone.³

Procedures and Responsibilities

Leadership and commitment

- We have a safe environments policy that complies with Achievement Program requirements.
- Our policies are regularly communicated to the whole school with opportunities to provide input/ feedback.
- Our policies are reviewed at least every three years and are ratified by school council.
- Our school complies with the Child Safe Standards.

Healthy physical environment

- Our school provides appropriate supervision of students and visitors.
- We require students to wear appropriate personal protective equipment when necessary to reduce injury risk.
- We undertake risk assessments within and outside school grounds and for excursions.

² DEECD What is Bullying?

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/what.aspx> (last updated 28 September 2013)

³ DEECD What is Bullying?

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- We take action to minimise risk, remove hazards and protect students from harm, including road traffic risk.
- Our equipment and buildings are well maintained, and any safety issues are responded to promptly.
- Our buildings and grounds are accessible and enable active participation for every student.

Healthy school culture

- We consider diversity and cultural practices when planning and implementing safety initiatives.
- Our school requires all persons over the age of 18 to submit their WWC documents to the office.
- Our school has clear expectations and agreements for safe, respectful, and responsible behaviours on school grounds, in classrooms and online for students, staff and families as determined by our Statement of Values Policy.
- We ensure that positive safety behaviours are modelled by staff, students, and families.
- Our school has processes in place to identify, report and respond to unsafe behaviours.

Student teaching and learning

- We teach students about positive safety behaviours including:
 - Road and bike safety
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Correct use of protective equipment
 - Correct use of facilities and equipment
 - Identifying and responding to safety hazards
 - Cyber safety and respectful online behaviour
 - Cultural safety and inclusive behaviour
- Students are encouraged to identify safety issues and given opportunities to be involved in improving and looking after the school grounds, gardens around their classroom and environment
- Staff have access to professional development and teaching resources about safety education and child safe requirements and undertake annual online mandated training as required
- We involve students in the design and implementation of safe environments initiatives and encourage students to contribute ideas about student-led learning opportunities through avenues such as Junior School Council

Supported staff



- Our school meets the OH&S guidelines to ensure a safe work environment for staff.
- We include safety information and policy requirements in staff induction/orientation.
- We support staff to learn about and practice safe behaviours, including cultural safety, cyber safety, and physical safety.
- We have a staff health and wellbeing policy, which ensures the workplace is a safe environment.
- Our OH&S Officer/Principal supports the education of staff through briefings at staff meetings and / or the provision of information.
- All staff are reminded to communicate to the OH&S Officer and the Principal.

Families and community partnerships

- We include families and the wider community in safety initiatives.
- We provide families and the wider community with information and practical strategies to support safety in the school and at home.
- Information we provide is evidence based and accessible to the whole school community.
- We partner with relevant organisations to support our safety initiatives and practices by speaking at parent evenings and school incursions.
- We work with specialist community organisations to ensure processes are in place and support is available if issues of safety are identified.

Relevant accountability documents

MCEECDYA, [National Safe School Framework](#)

Related school policies

- Digital Learning Policy
- Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Sunsmart Policy
- Staff Health and Wellbeing Policy

Communication

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

- Available publicly on school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in the MRPS Operations Guide



- Annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Review and approval

Plan last reviewed	8 th November 2023
Consultation	Inclusion & Engagement SIT and School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before November 2025, or following a critical incident.