

# **Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre Inc Macleay Vocational College**



## **STUDENT BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre Inc. (MVWLC Inc.) includes but is not limited to Macleay Vocational College, MVWLC Inc. RTO 6849, Macleay Valley Trade Training Centre, Kempsey Community Suicide Prevention, Ginda Barri Centre and Dunghutti Stitching. For the purposes of being clear in the application of this document, the organization will be referred to as “College” and it applies to all sections and programs of the organization.

The Student Behaviour Policy at Macleay Vocational College is underpinned by the Mission Statement of the College. Macleay Vocational College’s central aim is to educate the whole person within a caring community. Thus, the focus is upon the total development of students academically, physically, socially, emotionally and morally. Based upon the values of love of country and community, tolerance, responsibility and forgiveness, Macleay Vocational College seeks to emphasise the dignity of each person. Teaching students in its care the central importance of this value, is a focus of the College community. All members of the College community are encouraged to treat each other in a manner which reflects respect for the dignity of each person.

An essential facet of the Student Behaviour Policy is the involvement and support of parents, carers, guardians and community. In this partnership between the family, wider community and the College, honest regular communication is a key need.

The Student Behaviour Policy encompasses areas such as pastoral care, personal development, individual and community rights, responsibilities and discipline. Good behaviour is acknowledged and recognised by the Merit system (Ref Appendix 2, focus on Merit System). Unacceptable behaviour is reflected upon and then challenged through the College’s discipline guidelines (and the emphasis is on Restorative practices and positive behaviour education, self-regulation towards owning and changing behaviour).

Students are encouraged (expected as their time at VC increases) to accept responsibility for their behavior and continue to develop their tolerance, resilience for and acceptance of others.

### **DEFINITION**

Student behaviour refers to the conduct of the student in all College activities involved with College – both in and out of the classroom; away from College; on excursions, visits to other educational institutions, during visitors talks, community events or at any time when the students are representing the College.

### **RATIONALE**

A student behaviour policy should reflect the ethos of the College. It is therefore expected that each

member of the College community will:

- Build positive relational trust with other members of the community
- Seek to recognise and acknowledge the strengths in others
- Celebrate the small and large successes of students within the College
- acknowledge that with rights come responsibilities
- learn to reflect on their own actions, choices and decisions in their effects on others
- encourage positive behaviour that will result in the growth of mature habits
- encourage equality of opportunities for the diverse landscape students have come from at College
- enable others to feel safe and espouse inclusive values
- acknowledge the fact that we all make mistakes and that when we ask forgiveness and have genuine regrets we actively move towards reconciliation in all areas
- to encourage every individual to grow towards wholeness

## GUIDELINES

As in all schools there are certain rules laid down for students to follow. (Ref. Appendix 1, Focus on RESPECT)

All students at College have the opportunity to leave class and report to the Principal or walk around teacher or Aboriginal education worker. This action is to improve each student's resilience and self-regulation of behavior before it becomes an issue or an infringement.

In most cases these rules are adhered to, but there are occasions when a student infringes these rules. When an infringement does occur, the appropriate disciplinary actions are taken. These actions are consistently followed by an interview with the principal, College educational staff and Wellbeing staff, parents/carers/guardians and student to determine a more suitable behavior action pathway.

## POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MODELLING

The College strives to create a positive and safe environment. All members of the college staff are aware that they represent powerful models of positive behaviour to the students and community. This commences at the gate where we aim to welcome students as they arrive each day and encourage them to respond appropriately. Respect for ones' self and others is an important concept at the College and it is incumbent on all staff to model respectful behaviour and good manners. Students learn important social and communication skills from this.

The focus is on developing relationships and creating opportunities for students to learn prosocial behaviour; to make good choices, take responsibility for their actions and develop leadership skills. Through the Mentoring Program, students are able to identify their strengths and feel supported and affirmed. All staff are encouraged to notice positive student behaviour, to catch them being good, and use positive reinforcement. Common reinforcers are canteen vouchers, Merit Awards (see Merit system below) and end of year major awards. When mistakes are made, this is seen as an opportunity for learning about conflict resolution, self-control and the development of resilience and personal restorative actions. The College applies the restorative justice model to support student growth through difficult times.

Students are encouraged to represent the College when visitors are invited to the College and in the

wider community, for example on Anzac Day, at the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, reconciliation week, sorry day, Kinchella Boys Home celebrations and at the College's fundraiser for Westmead Children's Hospital.

## PARENT / CARER NOTIFICATION PRO-FORMAS

- Congratulations for effort, achievement and success in projects letters
- Excursions permission letter
- Invitations for community events such as BBQ days, Debutant Balls, Presentation Day and Health programs
- College Newsletters each term highlighting student achievements
- 'N' awards warning letters
- Student Behaviour Contract or Return to College agreement
- Agreement for the Continuation of Enrolment
- Habitual Absence or warning letter for Attendance

## THE HANDS-OFF RULE




This is a simple and effective rule which is actively enforced at the College. Each student has the right to attend College free of fear of physical harm or harassment.

## SUSPENSION

The philosophy of the College and enrolment process suggests that students make an active choice to be members of this community. This choice is evidenced in their commitment to maintain the terms of enrolment, which they agreed to upon their application for enrolment.

The College is based on Restorative approaches and has a unique system of recognising the effects of intergenerational and environmental trauma. This supports the process of procedural fairness taking into account the individual needs of each young person at College. This process of procedural fairness for students, is also afforded to parents, carers and guardians who are paramount in all decisions that affect time out of education.

Suspension from College takes many forms depending on the individual capacity of each student and the behavioural actions or choices the individual student has been demonstrating. Some examples of suspension are but not limited to;

-  the student having some individual time out of a particular/specific classroom
-  to being removed from classes for the day and spending time with the walk around teaching and support staff
-  being taken home that day for time out and returning the next day ready for classes

Some students due to the serious nature of their behaviour may be given options for an interview with their parents/carers/guardians, and may at times be recommended to utilise the support of the College Wellbeing staff. The next phase of this would be for the student to make use of a wider scale of support, calling in positive behaviour caseworkers for individualised support. The next step being an admission to programs external to College for a day or two each week.

In all situations, students will have an interview with the Principal to reflect on actions and choices to set a timeline for growth, repair damaged relationships and to encourage choices around suitable staff and peers who encourage and support their strengths based actions.

- Continuous disruption to their peers in class
- NON inclusive actions with other students or staff
- Repeated bullying in any form once an agreement has been established
- Fighting or instigating the fight promotion
- Possession of drugs and alcohol at College
- Any repeated offences without an acceptance of behavior and an agreement to work on correcting this behaviour– at the discretion of the Principal
- Threatening, intimidating, abusive or violent actions towards staff, students or visitors to the College
- Failure to follow the repeated directions of any staff member or Principal
- Not follow the agreed plan for Return to College after a suspension

## **EXPULSION**

### **(Permanent removal of a student from College)**

Our community is a small College in Kempsey which was formed under the inspiration of the Human Rights Declaration of Education for all in 1994. Since then the understanding of the values in education of the whole person has evolved. In Australia all states agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

With this statement as a basis of the philosophy and vision for the students engaged at College, it is often the last place that will allow them the opportunities to develop skills and confidence in their strengths. This supports them to make more positive choices to be away from situations many of their families have found themselves restricted by over generations. In cases where continued enrolment appears not to be beneficial, parents, guardians and carers may be asked to consider enrolling their child in more suitable educational facility. If this is the case the College Principal and Wellbeing staff will support the young person to find this facility or workplace if they are old enough.

A student maybe expelled when it is the opinion of the Principal in consultation with the College Executive, Mental Health & Wellbeing Team, Chair of the MVWLC Inc. Board or delegate, College teaching and Aboriginal Education Worker staff and any support or resource teacher and mentor the young person may have;

- ✚ The College's resources, both material and personal, are being wasted or abused by the student.
- ✚ The student is not able to demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the terms of enrolment.
- ✚ The Student has been involved in a serious incident of misconduct, which may or may not have necessitated other services involvement (police or ambulance)
- ✚ The student's misbehaviour is persistent and the student has been unwilling to accept the values and standards of the College as explained by the authority of the College.
- ✚ The student's behaviour is injurious to other members or visitors within the College community.

- ✚ The student is adversely affecting the education of other students and shows no recourse or willingness for the restoration of these actions or acceptance of conditions for support in these behavioural areas.
- ✚ The student is not benefitting from the programs or continued attendance at the College.
- ✚ The student has or had possession and/or use of drugs either at school or at a school related activity/event.
- ✚ The student's actions or behaviours have made the College an unsafe environment for them from their peers
- ✚ The student has been involved in an incident of misconduct of a sexual nature
- ✚ Support for addictive behaviours is being refused.

Expulsion from College and its wider programs will normally be the final step in an extended process. Documentation will be kept in student files of action taken at every step. Students will be a key partner in this process as the use of restorative practices throughout the process will enable their growth for after College life. Parents, carers and guardians will be informed at each stage.

The process will normally include:

- ✚ Opportunities for Restorative discussions with members of the community which have been distressed, injured or harmed by their actions.
- ✚ Discussions with the students of the consequences of behaviour from a restorative point of view.
- ✚ Withdrawal from class for small periods of time
- ✚ Commencing time onsite when most students have left College, individual teacher time.
- ✚ Contact with parents, carers, guardians and all caseworkers or supporting agencies about deteriorating conduct
- ✚ Interim behaviour Reports/monitoring reports
- ✚ Internal and external Suspensions from the College.
- ✚ Limiting activities and/or excursions and privileges for holidays programs
- ✚ Agreements for the continuation of enrolment at College
- ✚ Working with the numerous programs within the College staff supportive network.
- ✚ Working with the external agencies the College uses for behavioural support, Mental Health support, Domestic and Family Violence support, Juvenile justice and Youth Off Track programs, physical health and alternative programs etc
- ✚ Opportunities for learning occurring offsite with other trainers.

As such, expulsion of a student at College should be rare.

## EXCLUSION

Exclusion is defined as: preventing a student from enrolling in another named school, or schools, after having been expelled from this school.

This action would not normally occur with any member of the College community, as explained above under the Expulsion section. In cases where continued enrolment appears not to be beneficial, parents, guardians and carers may be asked to consider enrolling their child in a more suitable educational facility. If this is the case the College Principal and Wellbeing staff will support the young person to find this facility or workplace if they are old enough.

## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Staff employed at or involved with Macleay Vocational College are prohibited from using corporal punishment as a means of punishment or correction of students.

Corporal punishment is defined as the application of physical force in order to punish or correct a student but does not include the application of force only because of action taken to prevent personal injury to, or damage to or the destruction of property of, any person, including the student.

Macleay Vocational College does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-College persons, including parents/carers or guardians, to enforce discipline at the College.

## CONCLUSION

Student behaviour at this College is generally held in the community to be of an acceptable quality. We believe that this is due largely to the co-operation and consistency between the wider community and College. Where a young person knows that what is expected at College, and where his or her parents or carers have an open and trusting relationship with the College community and the College staff, then that child is free to grow in a secure environment.

<b>Policy Review Date</b>	<b>23.03.2021</b>
<b>Policy Reviewed By</b>	<b>Belinda Fowler – Bursar</b> <b>Mark Morrison – Principal</b>
<b>Policy Endorsed by resolution of the Board</b>	<b>BM:</b>

## APPENDIX 1

This focus is evident in the RESPECT for: yourself, other students, teachers, aides, all College staff, visitors, all other's property and our environment.

This rule is implemented practically by students:

- ✚ Saying hello or good morning to all staff, students and visitors daily
- ✚ Being punctual to, and prepared to be engaged (complete work) in class
- ✚ Following the directions of all staff in a polite manner
- ✚ Conducting themselves appropriately at all times
- ✚ Being respectful of other students opinions and values
- ✚ Taking care of the College environment and the property of others
- ✚ Putting their 'Hand Up' to assist others in the community
- ✚ Ending requests with a please or thank you
- ✚ Adhering to the "hands-off" rule

- ✚ Observing the rule of not interfering with fellow students work
- ✚ Not leaving class premises or College grounds without letting someone know where you are going
- ✚ Not smoking on the College grounds
- ✚ Not using your Mobile phone without permission in class
- ✚ Not confronting any members of the community in an intimidating, threatening, abusive or demeaning manner
- ✚ Not to bully any member of the College community
- ✚ The non-possession or use of drugs or alcohol at College on College property

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

Anti-Bullying Policy  
Corporal Punishment  
Merit System