



# *Macarthur Girls High School*

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## **STUDENT WELFARE POLICY**

*Student Welfare, Good Discipline and Effective Learning*

### **Rationale**

Government schools help students to become self directed, life long learners who can create a positive future for themselves and for the wider community. For this to occur, government schools need to be places where every student can learn and grow with confidence. Students develop best in schools where teaching and learning occur in a context of student welfare.

Schools need to be safe and happy places for students and their teachers. Student welfare is enhanced when all members of the school community participate in the learning programs and life of the school.

Schools provide effective learning and teaching within secure, well-managed environments, in partnership with parents and the wider school community. Student welfare in government schools:

- encompasses everything the school does to meet the personal, social and learning needs of all
- creates a safe, caring school environment in which students are nurtured as they learn
- is achieved through the total school curriculum and the way it is delivered
- incorporates effective discipline
- incorporates preventive health and social skills programs
- stresses the value of collaborative early intervention when problems are identified
- provides ongoing educational services to support students
- recognises the diversity within the school community and provides programs and support
- recognises the school's role as a resource to link families with community support services
- provides opportunities for students to enjoy success and recognition, make a useful contribution to the life of the school and derive enjoyment from their learning.

### **Policy**

Student welfare at Macarthur Girls High School focuses on the following 3 areas:

- Effective learning and teaching
- Positive climate and good discipline
- Community participation.

### **Macarthur Girls High School will provide effective learning and teaching by:**

- encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour
- identifying and catering for the individual learning needs of students
- establishing well-managed teaching and learning environments
- ensuring that learning activities build on prior knowledge and experiences and are socially and culturally relevant
- providing frequent opportunities for students and their parents to discuss learning programs and student behaviour and progress
- identifying key social skills and developing plans for all students to acquire them, or make progress towards them, over time
- ensuring that gender and equity issues are recognised and addressed across the curriculum.

### **Macarthur Girls High School will enhance school climate and discipline by:**

- maximising student participation in decision making and ensuring that principles of equity and fairness are reflected in school practice
- providing opportunities for students to demonstrate success in a wide range of activities
- developing and implementing policies and procedures to protect the rights, safety and health of all school community members
- establishing clear school rules which are known and understood by all school community members
- monitoring attendance and ensuring that students attend school regularly
- valuing and providing opportunities for all students to develop the skills involved in positive relationships, social responsibility, problem solving and dispute resolution
- valuing difference and discouraging narrow and limiting gender stereotypes
- incorporating students' views into planning related to school climate and organisation
- establishing networks to support students and making sure that students and parents know about, and have ready access to, this support
- recognising the relationship between student and staff welfare, ensuring staff welfare is a priority
- providing resources and opportunities for students to gain leadership experience using a range of mechanisms, including student representative councils or school parliaments.

**Macarthur Girls High School will enhance community participation by:**

- building learning communities where everyone works together for planned results
- encouraging parents and community members to participate actively in the education of young people and in the life of the school
- acknowledging parents as partners in school education
- encouraging students to have a sense of belonging to the school community
- assisting families to gain access to support services in the community
- fostering close links with the wider community
- encouraging links between parent and student representative groups
- inviting parents to share their skills and experiences in the school community
- supporting students and their parents in making decisions about learning programs
- recognising students' families, cultures, languages and life experiences.

**Outcomes**

Macarthur Girls High School is a disciplined, ordered and cohesive community where individuals take responsibility and work together, reflecting the values of our community and welcoming the participation of community members in the life of the school. The school is an inclusive environment which affirms diversity and respects difference. Staff facilitate parent and community involvement in a range of school activities where applicable.

As a result of the welfare and teaching programs and strategies implemented at Macarthur Girls High School, students are active participants in the learning process and their learning experiences support their individuality and are positive, engaging and relevant. The school's curriculum, strategic directions and milestones reflect the needs and aspirations of our students and the community.

The well-being, safety and health of students and other community members is a priority in all school policies, programs and practices. The Macarthur Girls High School *Code of Practice* provides clear guidelines for behaviour which are communicated and known by all. Parents participate in the education of their daughters and share the responsibility for shaping appropriate student behaviour.

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## **Student Welfare Policy Implementation / Procedures**

### **Student Welfare, Good Discipline and Effective Learning**

All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, harassment, victimization and discrimination. The Macarthur Girls High School Student Welfare Policy is about working together with our community to provide a quality learning environment which is friendly, inclusive, safe and supportive

The Student Welfare Policy encompasses a wide range of school activities of both an informal and formal nature. Macarthur Girls High School Student Wellbeing program, PRIDE, is seen not just as another of the school's programs, but as encompassing all aspects of school life, including learning opportunities which together optimize the wellbeing of our students.

The intended outcomes of the Macarthur Girls High School Student Welfare Policy are that all students will:

- feel that school is worthwhile
- see learning as a positive experience
- experience success in learning
- feel that their teachers can assist them with their problems and everyday concerns
- be able to expect confidential and/or sensitive treatment of their problems
- feel safe within the school environment
- develop friendships with other students in the school
- have a realistic self-concept and opportunity to develop their self esteem
- have positive attitudes towards authority
- mix easily with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds
- develop social skills appropriate to school, home and public environment

Related guidelines and documents include:

- Implementing the Student Welfare Policy
- Video: Student Welfare: Making things better for everyone
- Good Discipline and Effective Learning

Student wellbeing is an area of responsibility for all staff at Macarthur Girls High School. This requires an ongoing whole school commitment to student wellbeing and staff development to ensure all teachers feel able to meet this role. Regular meetings are held with various members responsible for student wellbeing.

- Principal, Stage Leaders, Head Teacher Wellbeing,
- Counsellor
- Career Adviser, HSLO
- Wellbeing Team
- Learning Support Team

#### **Programs and initiatives**

These are programs developed within the school to meet specific needs. They may be proactive, remedial, preventative, or just extend peoples' experiences. They include specific student wellbeing programs, enrichment programs and staff development.

## **People**

### **Roles and responsibilities**

While everyone in the school community has responsibility for student wellbeing, including students and parents, certain people by the nature of their role are expected to be reactive and proactive to student wellbeing needs.

*Principals will ensure that:*

- a commitment to student welfare underpins all the policies and activities of the school
- the school community regularly reviews policies and practices related to student welfare, using appropriate planning processes including the school discipline policy.
- students, staff and parents are assisted to develop strategies for addressing student welfare and discipline needs in all the activities of the school

*Teaching and support staff, according to their role in the school, will:*

- ensure that they are familiar with the Student Welfare Policy and the School Discipline Policy
- contribute to the provision of a caring, well-managed, safe environment for all students, fellow staff and parents
- participate in the learning and teaching process in ways which take account of the this policy
- participate in the school community's implementation of the Student Welfare Policy.

*Staff with a specific student support role will ensure that:*

- the school develops effective mechanisms for integrating behaviour management, conflict resolution and support for students experiencing difficulties.

*Students will be encouraged to:*

- act according to the discipline code established by the school community
- contribute to the provision of a caring, safe environment for fellow students, staff and parents
- participate actively in the learning and teaching process
- provide their views on school community decisions, including reviews of student welfare, using agreed processes including the student representative council
- practise peaceful resolution of conflict.

*Parents will be encouraged to:*

- participate in the learning of their children and the life of the school, including reviews of student welfare and the discipline code
- share responsibility for shaping their children's understanding about acceptable behaviour
- work with teachers to establish fair and reasonable expectations of the school.

Following is Macarthur Girls High School Code of Practice that all students and parents sign to adhere to each year. It is also located on Macarthur Girls High School Website at XXXXXXXXXXXX, and is in the student handbook issued to all students at the beginning of each academic year or on enrolment at this school

### **Review and evaluation**

The processes are to be reviewed at least every 3 years, with annual adjustments made if required. This review will be held in conjunction with the annual review of the discipline policy, which encapsulates these matters in its structure.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE**

Macarthur Girls High School rules are expressed in terms of responsibilities which each member of the school community is expected to adhere to. All the responsibilities are based on the principle that every teacher has the right to teach and every student has the right to learn in a safe, positive environment. As a member of the school community your rights are also your responsibility to others.

### **Positive Interactions**

I have the responsibility to:

- be involved in learning
- treat others courteously and with respect
- make school a safe place by not hitting, threatening or abusing anyone in any way
- be punctual and attend regularly
- respect other people's property by not stealing, damaging or destroying it.

### **Safe Environment**

I have the responsibility to:

- behave in a manner that earns community respect
- wear full school uniform each day
- care for the school environment by keeping it clean and well presented to support both the natural and manmade environment
- report any damage to school property to the staff
- ensure that no cigarettes/drugs/alcohol/weapons are used or brought onto school premises

Consistent implementation of these will give you self-respect, and the respect of your peers, teachers and the school community. It may also result in peer and school awards. Consistent failure to implement these will result in a range of management strategies and consequences being implemented.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Movement around school should be as quiet as possible and with consideration for others.
- Students who are feeling unwell need to report to Reception, with their diary signed by their teacher.
- Pupils should line up when at the canteen.
- Smoking is not permitted on the school property, on excursions, or by pupils in school uniform on their way to or from school.

Macarthur Girls High School's processes for discipline are attached to the Macarthur Girls High School Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy.

### **The following items are not permitted at school:**

- alcohol or drugs, knives, guns or other weapons (automatic Police involvement and student suspension)
- cigarette lighters, matches or cigarettes
- chewing gum
- liquid paper and thinners
- permanent felt tipped pens
- aerosol cans, e.g. deodorants
- long acrylic nails
- No responsibility will be taken for the theft or damage to mobile phones or electronic equipment (e.g. iPods, iPads, laptops, etc.) or other valuables brought to school.
- Electronic devices are not to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school in any way. (Refer to the Macarthur Girls Electronics Devices Policy for details on School Intranet).